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FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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COMBINED
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GREATER MANCHESTER HIGH RISE TASK FORCE

High Rise Residents Survey February 2020

*Completed by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of the Greater
Manchester High Rise Task Force*

Contents

- List of Tables..... 2
- List of Figures..... 3
- Document Version Control..... 3
- Executive Summary 4
- 1. Introduction..... 6
- 2. Methodology 7
- 3. Research Findings..... 10
 - 3.1. Building demographics 10
 - 3.2. Fire safety in individual properties..... 13
 - 3.3. Fire safety in high rise buildings 16
 - 3.4. Communication and engagement with residents 20
 - 3.5. Cold homes 24
 - 3.6. Health impact 26
 - 3.7. Financial impact..... 27
- 4. Conclusions and recommendations 31
- Appendix A – Survey Questions 34

List of Tables

- Table 1 - Stakeholders involved with the High Rise Resident's Survey 9
- Table 2 – Responses to the question “Do you own or rent your home?” 11
- Table 3 - Responses to the question "Which floor do you live on?" 11
- Table 4 - Responses to the question "How long have you lived in your flat?" 12
- Table 5 - Responses to the question "How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?" 14
- Table 6 - Responses to the question "How often do you test your smoke alarms?" 15
- Table 7 - Responses to the question "Have you ever sought advice about fire safety?" 20
- Table 8 - Responses to the question "Where did you receive fire safety information from?" 21

List of Figures

Figure 1 - Responses to the question "Has a fire risk assessment identified the cladding as a risk?" analysed by the question "Are you concerned about having a fire?" 14

Figure 2 - Analysis of smoke alarm testing by tenure 16

Figure 3 - Responses to the question "Do you know where the assembly points are for your building?" analysed with property tenure..... 19

Figure 4 - Responses to the question "Who do you trust to provide fire safety advice?" 22

Figure 5 - Responses to the question "Which format would you prefer to use to access fire safety and fire prevention advice?" 23

Figure 6 - Responses to the question "How regularly do you receive information from your landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in your building?" 24

Figure 7 - Responses to the question "During the cold winter months, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your flat" analysed by property tenure 25

Figure 8 - Responses to the question "Over the past 18 months, have you experienced any issues related to service charge, rent or insurance premiums" analysed by tenure 28

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Executive Summary

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, a High Rise Task Force was established in Greater Manchester to ensure every residential high rise tower block in Greater Manchester was safe from fire, and residents living in these tower blocks received appropriate fire safety advice. To support the work of the Task Force, a research project was proposed, which aimed to gather and analyse information about experiences and perceptions of fire risk amongst residents living in high rise buildings. While it is methodologically complex to identify whether perceptions and experiences have changed as a direct consequence of the Grenfell Tower fire, it is possible to gain an understanding of the retrospective impact of such a tragedy. In addition, commissioning a formal research project about residents' views and experiences allows the Task Force to collect information on key topics in a structured and robust way.

The findings of this survey should help the High Rise Task Force understand some of the issues and concerns faced by residents living in high rise buildings across Greater Manchester. In summary, the results from the survey have identified the following:

- Generally, residents living in buildings with cladding that has been identified as a risk are concerned about fire. Residents living in taller buildings were also more concerned about having a fire than those living in buildings with fewer storeys.
- Typically, residents are concerned about fire, but they generally think their likelihood to have a fire is low. Residents tend to be concerned that other residents living in the building do not take the same fire safety precautions as they do. Residents are concerned that fires happening elsewhere in the building may affect them and their home.
- There was a significant proportion of residents who did not know the correct evacuation procedures for their building. Some residents commented that they could not remember what they were, and others incorrectly said they should 'stay put', however the evacuation procedures had changed to a full evacuation. In addition, a large proportion of residents commented that they rarely receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety in their building. This may suggest that more communication and engagement with residents is needed to ensure they receive timely and up to date information about fire safety matters in their building.
- Residents commented that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) would be the most trusted source to provide information and guidance about fire safety. In addition,

residents commented that they would prefer to receive this information face to face (i.e. during meetings or visits), via the internet and social media or through posters and leaflets.

- Based on previous research completed by the Fuel Poverty Action Group¹, it was anticipated that residents may have experienced issues with cold homes due to cladding being removed but not yet replaced. However, this did not seem to be a significant issue to residents responding to this survey, with the majority of residents commenting that they were able to keep their home warm during the cold winter months. Questions related to the health and wellbeing impact of the Grenfell Tower fire were linked with the cold homes question. This means that only residents who said they experienced problems heating their home were asked questions about health impact. It is well researched that cold homes can impact negatively on respiratory and cardiovascular health, and the small number of residents who had issues heating their home also felt that their cold home had a negative impact on these conditions. Residents who completed this section of the survey also commented on their mental health and wellbeing during the period following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, many residents commented on their mental health and wellbeing in other parts of the survey. Residents commented on feelings of stress, anxiety and worry. It is recommended that more work is completed in this area to understand the impact fully.
- Residents discussed the financial impact they are experiencing because of fire safety remedial work at great length. Residents commented that they are experiencing financial problems because of increasing costs and they are feeling worried and anxious about how they will be able to afford increasing costs. Residents who own their property commented on how they are finding it difficult to sell their flat, which makes them feel 'trapped', and how this is also negatively impacting on relationships and their overall wellbeing.

¹ Fuel Poverty Action briefing: Cladding – A national emergency. Available at: <https://www.fuelpovertyaction.org.uk/research/>

1. Introduction

Following the fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017, a High Rise Task Force was established in Greater Manchester to ensure every residential high rise tower block in Greater Manchester was safe from fire, and residents living in these tower blocks received appropriate fire safety advice.

Since it was established, the work of the High Rise Task Force has included:

- Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) inspecting every residential high rise in Greater Manchester to ensure they comply with fire regulations. GMFRS officers have worked, and continue to work, with local authorities, social landlords, managing agents and residents to address fire safety concerns.
- Offering advice and support to residents on staying safe in their homes by offering Safe and Well visits to residents in affected blocks.
- Submitting evidence to the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety and Greater Manchester's view that the building regulations system is not fit for purpose and needs to be overhauled.
- Lobbying government to provide clear guidance and the necessary funding to ensure Greater Manchester buildings and residents are safe. This includes supporting housing providers and building owners with interim fire safety measures and the replacement of cladding systems, ensuring GMFRS has the resources needed to effectively enforce fire safety legislation, and protecting residents.
- Carrying out the Greater Manchester High Rise Residents Survey to gain a better understanding of the issues and concerns of residents, which will help direct and inform the future work of the Task Force.
- Submitting a Task Force response to the Government's Building a Safer Consultation, using resident views gathered from the resident survey and focus group to inform the response.
- Holding Civil Contingencies workshops for every borough in Greater Manchester to support contingency planning for significant events in high rise buildings.
- Working with housing providers to develop Greater Manchester standards and developing a procurement framework for fire alarms and retrospective installation of sprinklers.
- Salix Homes, one of the housing providers from the High Rise Task Force, are participating in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Early Adopter Programme to trial

ways of working in line with the recommendations of Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations.

At the time of conducting this research, 57 high rise residential buildings were in interim measures across Greater Manchester. At the time of publishing this research, the number of buildings in interim measures has increased to 80 across Greater Manchester. This reflects the increasing scale of fire safety defects being identified following invasive surveys and specialist reports which is not restricted to the risk of external fire spread posed by certain cladding systems.

A key area of work for the High Rise Task Force was to commission some research to understand residents' views in relation to their perception of risk and safety within the building where they live. There was some anecdotal evidence in the media and presented at the High Rise Task Force² suggesting that residents had concerns about fire safety in the building where they live. However, there was no formal process for residents to provide feedback on this in a structured way. Therefore, it was recognised that a study was required to understand this in more detail. It was anticipated that understanding residents' perceptions of risk and safety will help with future communications and engagement provided to residents living in high rise buildings.

While it is methodologically complex to identify whether perceptions and experiences have changed as a direct consequence of the Grenfell Tower fire, it is possible to gain an understanding of the retrospective impact of such a tragedy. In addition, commissioning a formal research project about residents' views and experiences allows the Task Force to collect information on key topics in a structured and robust way.

2. Methodology

The aim of this research was to understand residents' views on fire safety in the building where they live, and understand whether residents had experienced any problems, issues or concerns in their building in the period following the Grenfell Tower fire.

² Anecdotal evidence from residents regarding their views about fire safety in high rise buildings:

- Manchester Evening News – 24/06/17: <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/what-residents-think-cladding-being-13233036>
- ITV News Tonight Programme – 06/07/17: <http://www.itv.com/news/2017-07-06/how-safe-are-our-high-rises/>
- BBC News – 22/10/17: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-41666753>
- Manchester Evening News – 31/10/2019: <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/greater-manchester-tower-blocks-grenfell-17173253>

As such, the following research questions were addressed through this research:

- How do residents perceive risk and what has influenced these perceptions?
- Has residents' perception of fire risk and safety changed following the Grenfell Tower tragedy?
- Do residents feel that issues around fire safety are communicated to them in an appropriate and timely fashion?
- Have residents experienced any health or financial impact following the Grenfell Tower and remedial activities that have been ongoing since then?

Online surveys were used as the method of collecting information. Online surveys are an easy and cost effective method of capturing information. There are a number of advantages of using online surveys for this research. Online surveys have the ability to be distributed to a large audience relatively quickly and easily. In addition, online surveys can be conducted remotely by participants, preventing geographical dependence or dependence on the availability of researchers to conduct face to face interviews with participants. Finally, using online surveys provide an opportunity to repeat this research at a later date to understand whether residents' views have changed over time.

However, it is recognised that it can be difficult to capture qualitative information from residents using online surveys. Residents were asked some open questions in the online survey, which allowed them to provide feedback in their own words. In addition, it is anticipated that further qualitative research will be completed following the publication of the survey findings. The aim of this is to explore some of the key findings in more detail. This phase of the research will be delivered via focus group sessions with residents. Focus groups bring together a number of participants to explore and discuss a particular issue or theme. Open-ended questions and prompts are used by the facilitators to generate discussion amongst the group, encouraging self-reflection.

The online survey was hosted on Citizen Space, which is the system used by Greater Manchester Combined Authority for online surveys. Electronic submissions were able to be made between Monday 8th July and Sunday 15th September 2019. This provided sufficient time for the survey to be circulated to residents and give them an opportunity to complete. The survey was briefly paused on 28th July 2019 to allow for responses to be exported and considered within the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force response to the Building a Safer Future consultation.

During this time, the survey was promoted via the following methods:

- Promoted to members of the High Rise Task Force to be distributed through their networks;
- Regular promotion on GMFRS social media channels (Facebook and Twitter);

- Promotion through the High Rise Residents' Forum.

In the overall development of the survey, a range of stakeholders were involved in bringing it to fruition. Table 1 shows a list of stakeholders who were involved in the development of the residents' survey.

Table 1 - Stakeholders involved with the High Rise Resident's Survey

Element	Stakeholders
Initial consultation about the development of a residents' survey	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce members GMCA Research team
Development of a question set	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce members GMCA Research team GMCA Communications and Engagement team
Data Protection support and guidance ³	GMCA Information Governance Team
Advice on technical solution for distributing the survey	GMCA Communications and Engagement team
Promotion of the survey	High Rise Taskforce Communications
Handing of the raw data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Analysis of the data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Reporting on the data	GMFRS Research & Evaluation
Dissemination of findings	Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service High Rise Taskforce Communications High Rise Taskforce members

³ Support provided for the development of a Data Protection Impact Assessment for this research.

3. Research Findings

The following sections of this report outlines the findings from the online survey. This presents both the qualitative and quantitative responses that were provided by residents. Where relevant, some responses have been cross referenced with others to provide a greater understanding of potential issues or concerns that residents may be facing.

The report illustrates findings from the survey in a number of tables and graphs, with a narrative summarising the findings. In addition, quotes from residents have been included within this report. These are shown in *blue italic* font.

3.1. Building demographics

This section of the report aims to understand more about the buildings that residents who responded to the survey live in. In particular, this section aims to understand the following:

- Whether residents responding to the survey are leaseholders, or rent from a private landlord or housing association;
- Whether residents responding to the survey are living in high rise blocks of flats;
- Which floors of the building residents live on;
- How long residents have lived in their flat.

Understanding the building demographics was important to help understand residents' experiences. In addition, it was important to be able to differentiate whether, for example, residents who were leaseholders had a different experience from those who rented. This will help the Greater Manchester High Rise Task Force draw conclusions and make recommendations from the findings of this survey.

A total of 172 responses were received to the resident survey from 95 high rise buildings in Greater Manchester. Just over 50% of responses were received from leaseholders. Twenty-seven percent of responses were from residents who rent their flat from a housing association or the council and a further 17% were from residents who rent from a private landlord. Smaller proportions of responses were from residents who live rent free, rent from family or friends or have shared ownership of their flat. This is illustrated in Table 2. This is broadly representative of tenure across Greater Manchester,

where approximately 60% of properties are owner occupied, 22% are rented from a housing association and 17% are privately rented⁴.

Table 2 – Responses to the question “Do you own or rent your home?”

Tenure	Proportion of responses
Live rent free	1.2%
Other	1.2%
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	51.7%
Rent from a housing association or the council	27.3%
Rent from a private landlord	17.4%
Rent from family or friends	0.6%
Shared ownership	0.6%

Seventy-seven percent of residents responding to the survey live in buildings taller than seven storeys. To break this down further, 22% of residents live in buildings that have between seven and ten storeys; 21% live in buildings that have between 11 and 14 storeys and 34% live in buildings with more than 15 storeys. Almost 95% of residents responding to this survey who rent from a housing association live in buildings taller than seven stories, compared with 83% of residents who privately rent and 68% of residents who own their property. When asked which floor they live on, approximately 25% of residents responding to this survey live on floors one to three, 26% live on floors four to six and 27% live on floors seven to ten. Twenty-two percent of residents responding to this survey live on the 11th storey or higher within their building. This is illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3 - Responses to the question “Which floor do you live on?”

Which floor do you live on?	Proportion of responses
1 – 3	25.0%
4 – 6	26.2%
7 – 10	26.7%
11 – 14	13.4%
15 +	8.7%

⁴ Greater Manchester Housing Strategy: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2257/gm-housing-strategy-2019-2024.pdf>

Seventy-six percent of residents participating in the survey have lived in their flat for longer than two years. When this is analysed by tenure, 87% of residents who own their flat and 81% of residents who rent from a housing association have lived in their flat for longer than two years. This compares to 37% of residents who privately rent who have lived in their flat for longer than two years. Approximately 54% of residents responding to this survey who privately rent have lived in their flat for less than one year. This is illustrated in Table 4 below. It was important to understand this as it shows whether the resident was living in their flat at the time of the Grenfell Tower fire. This may assist with our understanding of residents’ feelings and experiences, which are explored later in this report.

Table 4 - Responses to the question "How long have you lived in your flat?"

Length of time lived in flat	Less than 6 months	Between 6 months and 12 months	Between 13 months and 18 months	Between 19 months and 24 months	Longer than 24 months
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	1%	3%	6%	3%	87%
Rent from a housing association or the council	0%	6%	6%	4%	81%
Rent from a private landlord	27%	27%	10%	0%	37%

Over 70% of residents responding to this survey said their building has cladding. When this was analysed by tenure, approximately 82% of residents who own their flat said their building has cladding. In addition, approximately 47% residents who privately rent their flat said their building has cladding. However, almost 37% of residents who privately rent their flat said they were unsure whether their building has cladding. Finally, approximately 66% of residents living in properties rented from a housing association said their building has cladding.

Of those who said their building has cladding, approximately 70% said their cladding has been identified as a risk following a fire risk assessment. This equates to approximately 50% of the total number of responses to this survey.

As described previously, this information can be used to understand more about residents’ experiences and views of fire safety within the building where they live.

3.2. Fire safety in individual properties

This section explores residents' responses to questions related to fire safety within their flats. The following questions were asked:

- Are you concerned about having a fire in your home?
- How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?
- Do you take any measures to prevent fire in your home?
- Do you have working smoke alarms in your home?
- How often do you test your smoke alarms?

Approximately 65% of residents responding to the survey said they were concerned about having a fire in their home. When analysed by property tenure, leaseholders were more concerned about having a fire than those who rent their property from a housing association or from a private landlord. Seventy-three percent of leaseholders were concerned about having a fire compared with 53% of those renting from a housing association and 50% of those renting from a private landlord. Generally, those living in taller buildings were more concerned about having a fire than those living in blocks of flats with fewer storeys. Approximately 71% of residents living in blocks of flats with 15 or more storeys were concerned about having a fire, compared to 61% of residents living in blocks of flats with six or fewer storeys.

Residents who live in buildings with cladding were more likely to be concerned about having a fire than those who live in buildings without cladding. In addition, residents living in buildings where the cladding was identified as a risk during a fire risk assessment were more worried about having a fire than residents who live in buildings where the cladding was not identified as a risk. This is illustrated in Figure 1. Approximately 77% of residents who live in a building where cladding was identified as a risk were worried about having a fire. This compared to 48% of residents living in a building where the cladding has not been identified as a risk.

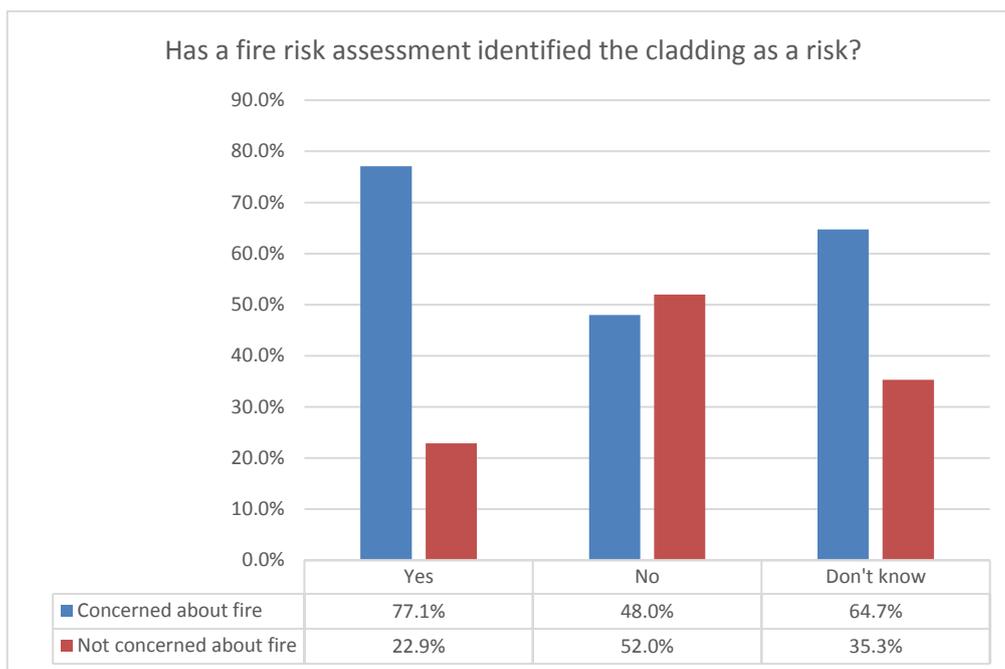


Figure 1 - Responses to the question "Has a fire risk assessment identified the cladding as a risk?" analysed by the question "Are you concerned about having a fire?"

Approximately two thirds of residents who are concerned about fire have sought fire safety advice. Accessing fire safety advice will be explored further in Section 3.4 of this report.

Although residents were worried about having a fire, over 70% thought they were either 'not very likely' or 'not at all likely' to actually have a fire. Eighteen percent of residents thought they were either 'likely' or 'very likely' to have a fire. There was a significant difference in residents' perception of their likelihood to have a fire when analysed by property tenure. Approximately 21% of residents renting their flat from a housing association thought they were 'likely' or 'very likely' to have a fire compared with 13% of residents renting from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5 - Responses to the question "How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?"

How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?	Likely or very likely	Unlikely or very unlikely
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	16.9%	73.0%
Rent from a housing association or the council	21.3%	70.2%
Rent from a private landlord	13.3%	76.7%

However, when analysed by the building demographics, residents who responded to this survey and who live in taller buildings tended to believe they were very likely to have a fire. Approximately nine percent of residents who live in a building taller than 15 storeys and six percent of residents living in a building with between 11 and 14 storeys thought they were very likely to have a fire in their home. There were no residents living in buildings under ten storeys who thought they were very likely to have a fire.

While the majority of residents thought they themselves were ‘unlikely’ or ‘very unlikely’ to have a fire, they were concerned about other residents in the building not taking the same fire safety precautions. Residents were more concerned about a fire occurring elsewhere in the building that may affect their home than a fire occurring within their own flat.

Almost all residents (98%) responding to the survey said they have working smoke alarms fitted in their flat, however the frequency that residents test their smoke alarms varied. This is illustrated in Table 6. Just over a quarter of residents responding to the survey test their smoke alarms either monthly or weekly (as recommended by the Fire Kills campaign and GMFRS). A further 40% test their smoke alarms at least every six months. However, just over 30% of residents responding to the survey said they test their smoke alarms less frequently or never test their smoke alarms.

Table 6 - Responses to the question "How often do you test your smoke alarms?"

How often do you test your smoke alarms?	
Weekly	8.7%
At least once a month	17.4%
Every few months	25.6%
Every 6 months	15.1%
Less frequently	26.2%
Never	6.4%
Not Answered	0.6%

When analysed by property tenure, those renting their flat from a housing association were more likely to test their smoke alarms more frequently than those who either owned their flat or rented from a private landlord. Approximately 40% of residents completing this survey who rent their flat from a housing association test their smoke alarms at least monthly, compared with 23% of residents who rent from a private landlord and 17% of residents who own their flat. Residents who rent their flat from a private landlord were most likely to respond to say they never test their smoke alarms when

compared with leaseholders or those who rent from a housing association. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

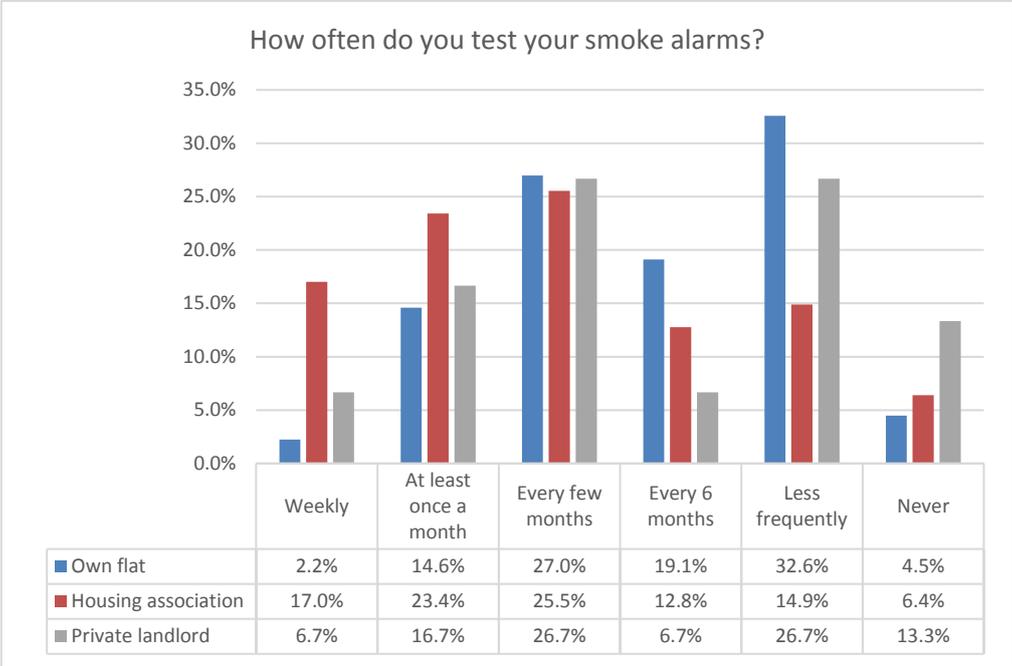


Figure 2 - Analysis of smoke alarm testing by tenure

3.3. Fire safety in high rise buildings

This section explores residents’ responses to questions related to fire safety within their building. The following questions were asked:

- Does your building have a fire alarm, and does it extend into your flat?
- Do you know the evacuation procedures for your building?
- Can you evacuate safely in the event of a fire?
- Have you participated in a fire drill in your building?

Approximately 80% of residents responding to the survey said their building is fitted with a fire alarm system. Of those who said their building has a fire alarm system, 28% of residents said the fire alarm extended into their flat. However, almost 12% of residents responding said they were unsure whether their building was fitted with a fire alarm system.

When this is analysed by tenure, residents renting their properties from a housing association were more likely to know if the fire alarm extended into their flat when compared with residents who own

their flat or rent from a private landlord. Thirty-two percent of residents who rent from a private landlord and 30% of residents who own their flat were unsure whether the fire alarm extended into their property. This compares with just eight percent of residents renting from a housing association who were unsure whether the fire alarm extends into their flat.

Residents living in a building with a fire alarm were asked whether they have ever heard it being tested. Forty-six percent of residents said they have heard their fire alarm being tested and the same proportion said they have not heard their fire alarm being tested. Approximately 60% of residents who rent their flat from a housing association say they have heard their fire alarm being tested. This compared with 40% of those who either rent from a private landlord or own their flat.

Residents were asked if they knew the evacuation procedures for their building. Approximately three quarters of residents who own their flat said they knew their buildings' evacuation procedures. A similar proportion of residents who rent from a housing association also said they know their buildings' evacuation procedures. However, only 30% of residents who privately rent their property said they know their buildings' evacuation procedures. For those who privately rent their property, residents who did not know their buildings' evacuation procedures were more likely to have lived in their flat for less than one year. The opposite was true for residents who owned their property or rented from a housing association. Residents who said they did not know their buildings' evacuation procedures were more likely to have lived in their flat for over two years.

Residents were asked to comment on the evacuation procedures for their building. This was analysed against the correct evacuation procedure for the building. Approximately one third of residents responding to this question incorrectly stated the fire evacuation procedures for their building. When this was analysed by tenure, approximately two thirds of residents who incorrectly stated their buildings' evacuation procedures were owner occupiers. Approximately one third of residents who incorrectly stated their buildings' evacuation procedures rent from a housing association. Some residents commented that they were told the evacuation procedures when they signed the tenancy agreement, but could no longer recall what they were. A number of residents commented that their building had a 'full evacuation', or they would evacuate regardless, even though the recommended procedure for their building was 'stay put'. A small number of residents incorrectly thought the evacuation procedures for their building was 'stay put', however it had been changed to a full evacuation.

Almost 60% of residents responding to the survey said they feel that they would be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire. However, almost 20% said they would not be able to evacuate safely and

a further 20% were unsure whether they would be able to evacuate safely. When this was analysed by self-declared disability, approximately 30% of residents living with a disability said they would not be able to safely evacuate in the event of a fire and a further 16% said they were unsure whether they would be able to evacuate safely.

There did not appear to be any correlation between ability to evacuate in the event of a fire when analysed by the floor of the building the resident lives on. Approximately 70% of residents living on the 15th storey or higher felt that they would be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire. However, 21% of residents living on the 15th storey or higher felt that they would not be able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire. This compares with 60% of residents who live on the seventh floor or lower who feel that they could evacuate safely in the event of a fire and 17% of residents who feel they could not evacuate safely.

Of those residents who do not feel they are able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire, approximately 30% informed their landlord or managing agent about their concerns. These residents were invited to share what advice they had received from their landlord or managing agent. Some residents commented that they have been put on a list of 'vulnerable residents' within the building, which would be shared with emergency services in the event of a fire. Other residents commented that their landlord or managing agent provided advice, and ensured they understood the evacuation procedure and fire safety advice for their building. Some residents stated that they have been advised to 'stay put' and await help from the emergency services. Although advice has been given to some residents, a number were unhappy or uncomfortable with this advice as they still worried about what would happen in the event of a fire. In addition, a number of residents commented that they raised concerns about their ability to evacuate, but no plans have been put into place in case of an emergency.

Residents left the following comments in the survey.

"[I've told my landlord / managing agent] many times until I'm blue in the face. [They are] not interested"

"They [landlord / managing agent] don't listen"

"I've been waiting since Feb 2019 to see Fire Risk Assessment document"

Residents were asked to comment on whether they have participated in a fire drill within their building. The majority (92%) of residents responding to this survey have not participated in a fire drill. Of the small proportion that have participated in a fire drill:

- 33% commented that the fire drill occurred within the past month;
- 17% commented that the fire drill occurred within the past two to three months;
- 25% commented that that the fire drill occurred within the past four to six months;
- 25% commented that the fire drill occurred longer than six months ago.

When residents were asked if they knew where their building’s assembly point is, 47% said they did know where the assembly point is and 53% commented that they did not know where it is. Residents who rent their property from a housing association were more likely to know where assembly points are located when compared with residents who own their property or rent from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

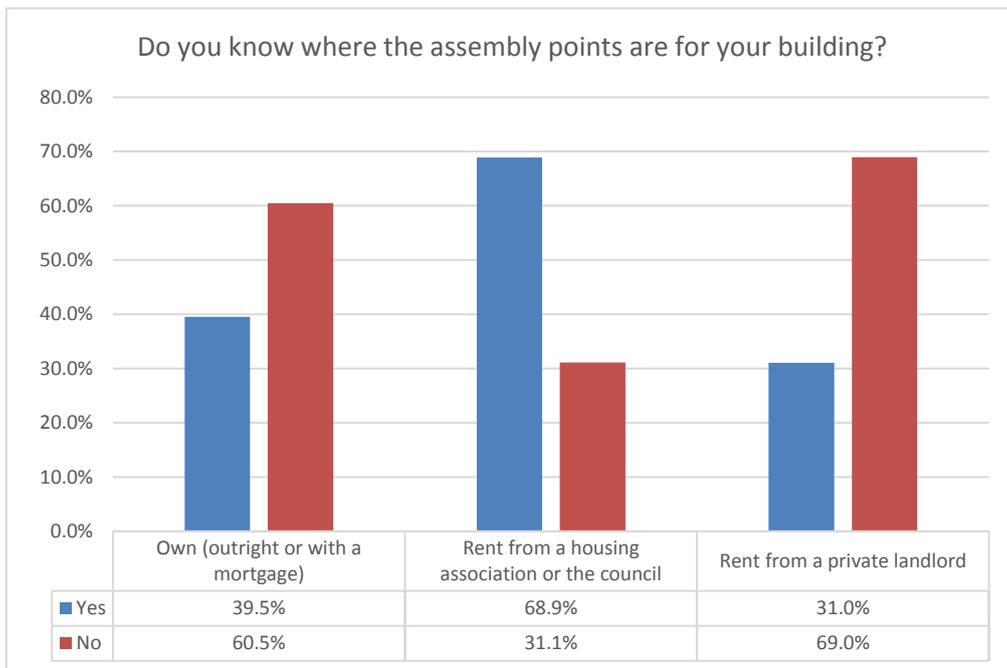


Figure 3 - Responses to the question "Do you know where the assembly points are for your building?" analysed with property tenure

Approximately 10% of residents responding to the survey said their building frequently has obstructions that would impede their escape in the event of a fire. The obstructions within buildings include pushchairs and prams in communal areas, large amounts of rubbish, boxes and bin bags within the building and people sleeping in doorways of buildings. In addition, some residents commented that fire doors are propped open in some buildings, which may result in a spread of smoke in stairwells if there was a fire within the building.

3.4. Communication and engagement with residents

This section explores residents' responses to questions about accessing advice about fire safety, and their preferred methods of communication and engagement. The following questions were asked:

- Have you ever sought fire safety advice?
- Who would you trust to provide fire safety advice?
- Which formats would you prefer to use to access fire safety advice?
- Do you receive fire safety advice from your landlord or managing agent?

Residents were asked whether they have ever sought advice about fire safety. Approximately 40% had previously sought advice. When this was analysed by property tenure, residents who rent their property from a housing association were most likely to have sought advice previously. Residents who rent from a private landlord were least likely to have sought advice previously. This is illustrated in Table 7. In addition, approximately 50% of residents living in buildings where cladding was identified as a risk have accessed fire safety advice. Again, this was highest amongst residents living in housing association properties (70%) and lowest in residents renting from a private landlord (20%).

Table 7 - Responses to the question "Have you ever sought advice about fire safety?"

Tenure	Have you ever sought advice about fire safety?	
	Yes	No
Own (outright or with a mortgage)	40.4%	59.6%
Rent from a housing association or the council	51.1%	48.9%
Rent from a private landlord	10.0%	90.0%
Other	50.0%	50.0%

Residents who have received fire safety advice were asked where they accessed this advice from. Approximately 42% have received a visit from GMFRS and a similar proportion have received advice from their managing agent. In addition, 30% received advice from Government fire safety campaigns. This is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8 - Responses to the question "Where did you receive fire safety information from?"

Where did you access fire safety information from?	
Received a visit from GMFRS	42.4%
Managing agent	42.4%
Government fire safety campaigns	30.3%
Landlord	27.3%
Visited the GMFRS website	22.7%
Friends and family	22.7%
Other	12.1%
Visited another FRS website	10.6%

Further analysis showed that of those who have received a visit from GMFRS, 45% were delivered to residents who own their home and 45% were delivered to those who rent from a housing association. Only seven percent of visits were delivered to residents who rent from a private landlord.

Residents were asked who they trusted most to provide advice about fire safety. The majority of residents (96.5%) said they would trust GMFRS to provide advice. Smaller proportions of residents said they would trust sources such as Government websites, their local council or their managing agent. A small proportion suggested other sources of information they would trust, such as the Fuel Poverty Action group, residents associations and fire engineers. This is illustrated in Figure 4.

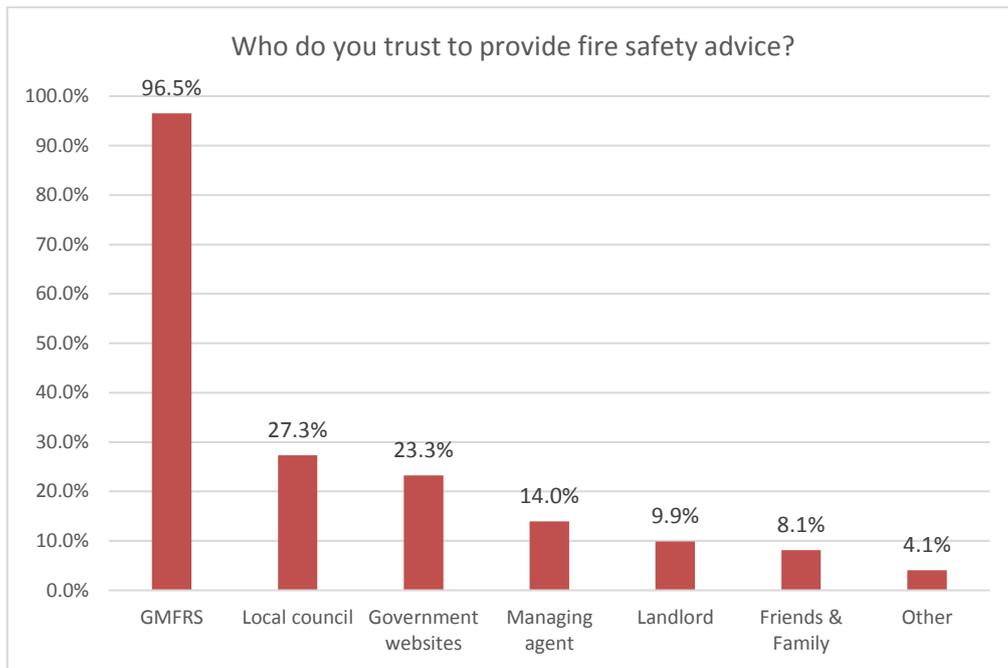


Figure 4 - Responses to the question "Who do you trust to provide fire safety advice?"

Residents were asked which formats they would prefer to use to access fire safety advice. Almost 65% of residents said they would prefer face to face visits. Sixty-three percent of residents said they would like to access fire safety content on the internet. Leaflets were also a popular format for receiving fire safety advice, with just over 50% of residents commenting that they would like to access information in this way. Accessing information about fire safety via newspapers, TV and radio were less popular formats. In addition, some residents commented that they would like to receive information via emails, text messages, meetings, online videos and social media. This is illustrated in Figure 5.

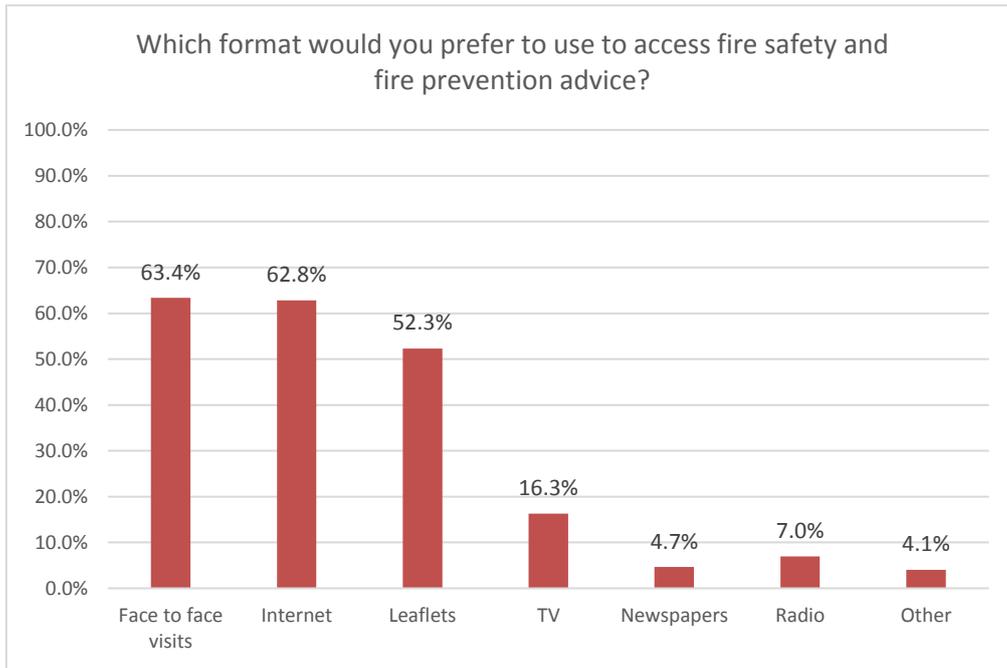


Figure 5 - Responses to the question "Which format would you prefer to use to access fire safety and fire prevention advice?"

Residents were asked how frequently they receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures within their building. Approximately 30% of residents responding to the survey receive information at least every few months. In addition, 14% receive information every six to twelve months. However, approximately 55% of residents said they receive information less frequently or never receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures within their building. Residents who rent their property from a private landlord were more likely to say they never receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety when compared with those who own their property or rent from a housing association. Those renting their property from a housing association felt most informed about the fire safety procedures within their building, as 43% said they receive information at least every few months. However, there were large proportions across all tenures who felt they were not well informed about fire safety within their building. This is illustrated in Figure 6.

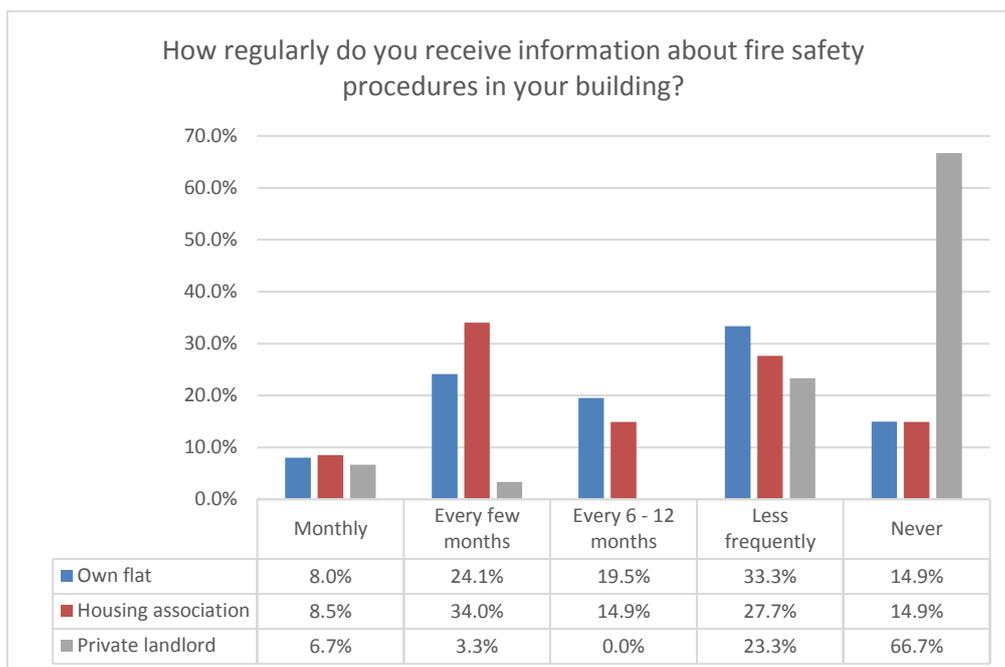


Figure 6 - Responses to the question "How regularly do you receive information from your landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in your building?"

3.5. Cold homes

This section explores residents' responses to questions related to indoor temperature within their flat. Nationally, there has been some evidence to suggest buildings where cladding has been removed (or partially removed) are difficult to heat in the winter months and residents are feeling the effects of the cold⁵. Therefore, residents were asked questions about the following topics to understand if this was an issue within Greater Manchester:

- Can you keep your home comfortably warm during the cold winter months?
- How did indoor temperature last winter compare with the winter before?
- Does indoor temperature impact on existing health conditions?
- Does the indoor environment in your flat impact on your mental health and wellbeing?

Residents were asked if they were able to keep their flat comfortably warm during the cold winter months. Approximately 83% of residents stated that they were able to keep their flat comfortably

⁵ Fuel Poverty Action briefing: Cladding – A national emergency. Available at: <https://www.fuelpovertyaction.org.uk/research/>

warm. Those who rent their property from a housing association were more likely to say they have problems keeping their property warm than those who own their flat or rent from a private landlord. Approximately 30% of residents living in a flat rented from a housing association said they have problems keeping their flat warm compared with nine percent of residents who own their flat and ten percent of residents who rent from a social landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 7.

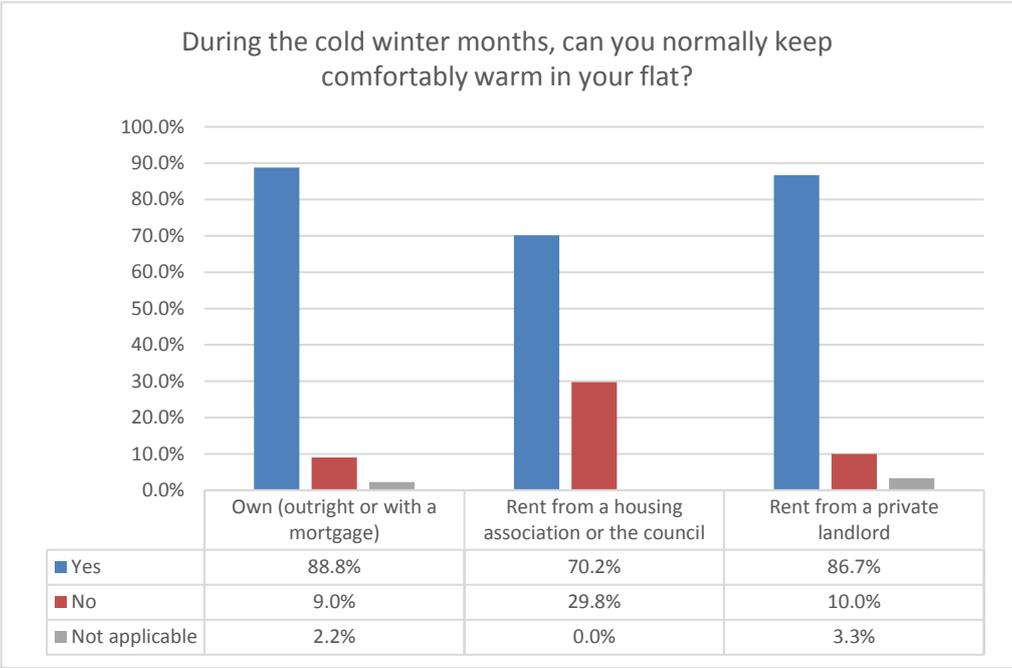


Figure 7 - Responses to the question "During the cold winter months, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your flat" analysed by property tenure

Residents were then asked how their indoor temperature last winter compared with the winter before. Seventy-two percent of residents completing this survey said that they noticed no difference in indoor temperature last winter compared with the winter before. However, approximately 12% of residents found their flats harder to heat. When this was analysed by the storey the resident lived on, residents living on lower storeys within their building were more likely to say their flat was harder to heat than residents living on higher storeys of the building. Approximately 30% of residents living on storeys one to seven of a high rise block found their flats harder to heat, compared with 11% of residents living on storeys eight or higher.

3.6. Health impact

Residents who said they had problems heating their home in the winter months were then asked whether they had experienced any health problems as a result of their home being cold. As the majority of residents said they had no issues keeping their home warm during the winter months, only a small number of residents completed this question (15% of the total number of residents responding to the survey).

Initially residents were asked whether anyone living in the property has experienced any respiratory conditions, cardiovascular conditions and/or arthritis. Cold living environments are known to aggravate these conditions.⁶

Approximately half of residents who were asked this question said they have experienced these conditions. Of those who have experienced these conditions, approximately 60% felt that their housing environment impacts negatively on their health. When asked to explain why, residents commented that cold temperatures affects their breathing because they are living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma. Other residents commented that heating their flat is expensive, therefore are reluctant to switch on their heating during the cold weather, which then impacts on their health.

Residents were also asked whether their home environment has an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Two thirds of residents responding to this question said that their home environment does have an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. This rate may be higher as a large proportion of residents did not complete this question, but commented on feelings of worry, anxiety and stress elsewhere in the survey. Some residents who completed this question commented that they are feeling worried that a fire may break out in their building and spread in a similar way to the fire at Grenfell Tower. Some residents commented that this worry and stress is preventing them from sleeping properly. Other residents said they are worried about being able to sell their flat because of cladding and other fire safety issues that are present within the building.

⁶ Institute of Health Equity report “The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty”. Available at <http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/the-health-impacts-of-cold-homes-and-fuel-poverty>

3.7. Financial impact

This section explores whether residents have experienced any financial implications as a result of remedial fire safety works that have occurred in their building following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, this section explores whether residents who own their flat have experienced any problems when trying to sell or remortgage their property. These problems have been reported widely in the press and residents have informed the High Rise Taskforce about the problems they have been experiencing via social media and at High Rise Resident Forum meetings. The aim of this subset of questions is collect information on this topic in a more robust, standardised way.

Residents were asked whether any actions had been taken in their building in response to the Grenfell Tower fire.

- Thirty-six percent of residents, across 27 buildings, said their building has used a waking watch over the past 18 months.
- Twelve percent of residents, across 16 buildings, said there has been removal or replacement of cladding on their building over the past 18 months.
- Nine percent of residents, across 13 buildings, said fire doors have been replaced in their building over the past 18 months.
- Five percent of residents, across eight buildings, said sprinklers have been installed in their building over the past 18 months.

In addition, residents also commented on additional remedial works that have occurred in their building. These include:

- Installation of fire alarms systems;
- Provision of new fire extinguishers;
- Removal of car parking spaces directly under the building;
- Works related to internal compartmentation of flats.

However, a number of residents commented that they were unaware whether any remedial works have taken place. All of the residents who said they were unsure whether any remedial works had taken place have lived in their flat for over two years, however said they did not receive regular information about fire safety from their landlord or managing agent. Approximately half of the residents who said they were unaware of any remedial works owned their flat, and the other half said they rent from a private landlord.

Residents were asked whether they have experienced any problems related to the costs of their service charge, rent or insurance premiums over the past 18 months. Approximately 35% said they have experienced problems because of costs and 36% said they have not experienced problems. Approximately 20% said this question was not applicable to them because they have lived in their flat for less than 18 months. When analysed further by property tenure, residents who own their flat were most likely to say they have experienced problems because of costs over the past 18 months when compared with residents who rent their flat. Fifty-three percent of residents who own their flat said they have experienced problems because of increasing costs over the past 18 months. This compares to approximately 15% of those who rent from a housing association and 17% who rent from a private landlord. This is illustrated in Figure 8.

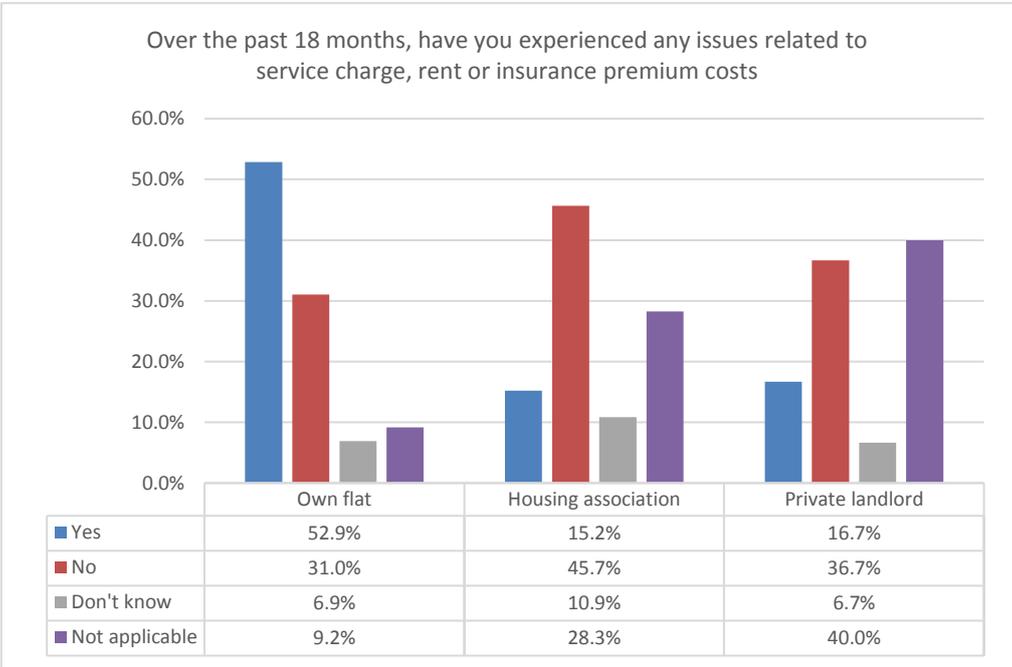


Figure 8 - Responses to the question "Over the past 18 months, have you experienced any issues related to service charge, rent or insurance premiums" analysed by tenure

Analysis of the free text responses provided showed what financial problems and concerns residents living in high rise properties were facing. The analysis showed that residents who owned their flat were most concerned about the financial impact of increasing costs. Residents commented that increasing service charges to cover the costs of fire safety remedial work and replacement of cladding was causing significant problems. Some residents commented on an increase in service charges of over 400%. Other residents commented that they have been presented with significant bills to cover the costs of remedial works.

“Additional service charge from £90 per month to £480 per month to cover cladding replacement”

“[I have] been charged £10,000 for works”

Some residents commented that they have not experienced increased costs yet, but were anticipating costs increasing significantly in the future.

“Each flat might have to pay £30,000 to have the cladding removed”

“Work has not started but [Management Company] has proposed cost of works to be added to our maintenance charge. Approximately an extra £1000 per month”

Finally, some residents commented that they were faced with costs for remedial works, but this was withdrawn following a campaign from residents.

“...attempted to charge us for remedial cladding works, but the threat was withdrawn after public pressure”

Residents living in privately rented flats also discussed the financial impact experienced as a result of increasing costs. For some, this has resulted in them looking to live elsewhere. However, others commented that they have had to review their budget to be able to afford increasing costs.

“Aside from the increases, no issues but it is forcing us to move”

“We are having to cut back to be able to afford increased costs, and I can’t afford to save to buy a house because of increased costs”

However, residents living in flats rented from a housing association commented more on the perception of paying for a service they do not receive. The comments provided did not mention that increased costs were causing problems financially, however there was a frustration that costs appeared to be increasing, but the service provided was less than what they would expect to receive.

“We pay for a service we do not get, for example, we pay for 24/7 onsite security, but we’re lucky if we get them a few days per week and our security gates are often broken”

Finally, residents were asked if they had tried to sell or remortgage their home within the past 18 months. Approximately 17% of residents responding to the survey said they have tried to sell or remortgage their home. A number of these residents said they experienced problems or issues when trying to sell or remortgage. Some residents also commented that they would like to sell their flat, but they are aware that others have experienced problems, therefore have deliberately not pursued this until there is more clarity on what documentation is required for any potential buyers to secure a mortgage. A significant number of residents commented that they were unable to sell or remortgage without proof that the cladding on their building was non-combustible. Some residents commented that they needed a fire safety certificate, others commented that they needed a 'cladding report', therefore it was evident that residents are unsure about what is required to be able to proceed with a sale or remortgaging.

"Applied for additional borrowing to cover cost of S20... This was denied on the basis of not having a fire safety certificate"

"Buyer not able to proceed without building certificate"

Some residents have commented that they feel 'trapped' because they are unable to sell their properties. A number of residents commented that they would like to move on, but cannot until fire safety issues are resolved and more clarity is provided to lenders and potential buyers.

"My wife and I want to move out but due to cladding, we cannot sell or get a mortgage on a new property so we are 'stuck'"

"[I feel] trapped here until the cladding is sorted"

Other residents have commented that the sale of their flats have fallen through because lenders are unwilling to offer mortgages, or will not offer a mortgage until there is a guarantee on what type of cladding is on the building. Even with the correct paperwork, some residents are still finding it difficult to sell their flat.

"I have been trying to sell my apartment for the past 15 months. Two buyers have backed out of the sale as there was no cladding report...I'm still finding it hard to sell my apartment and move on."

"I was unable to sell due to a large number of fire safety issues. I only discovered this after having an offer accepted on a house and having found a buyer for the flat."

“Tried to sell but buyer’s mortgage lenders requested a document that [managing agent] couldn’t provide... the buyer has since dropped out.”

Those residents who were able to find buyers commented that they were offered significantly less than the property was worth. However, some residents commented that their property has become ‘worthless’. As a result, residents are being faced with a decision to either not sell their property, or if they can find a buyer, sell their property and experience a significant financial impact.

“Only cash buyers at 30% discount to normal price”

“The sale fell through as we didn’t have a fire safety certificate. We have now been told that our property is worth zero.”

However, a common theme for many residents responding to this question was that their experiences of trying to sell or remortgage was having a negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Some residents commented that their mental health was affected because they are unable to find a buyer for their property and move on. Others commented that they are stressed and worried because being unable to sell is impacting on their longer term plans. Finally, some residents commented that the stress and worry of trying to sell their property, combined with fire safety concerns about their building, is having a damaging effect on relationships with family and friends.

“I was unable to sell due to a large number of fire safety issues. I only discovered this after having an offer accepted on a house and having found a buyer for the flat. This has caused a huge amount of distress and worry.”

“...we have now been told that our property is worth zero which has had a very damaging effect on our relationship and mental health.”

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this survey should help the High Rise Task Force understand some of the issues and concerns faced by residents living in high rise buildings across Greater Manchester. In summary, the results from the survey have identified the following:

- Generally, residents living in buildings with cladding that has been identified as a risk are concerned about fire. Residents living in taller buildings were also more concerned about having a fire than those living in buildings with fewer storeys.
- Typically, residents are concerned about fire, but they generally think their likelihood to have a fire is low. Residents tend to be concerned that other residents living in the building do not take the same fire safety precautions as they do. Residents are concerned that fires happening elsewhere in the building may affect them and their home.
- There was a significant proportion of residents who did not know the correct evacuation procedures for their building. Some residents commented that they could not remember what they were, and others incorrectly said they should 'stay put', however the evacuation procedures had changed to a full evacuation. In addition, a large proportion of residents commented that they rarely receive information from their landlord or managing agent about fire safety in their building. This may suggest that more communication and engagement with residents is needed to ensure they receive timely and up to date information about fire safety matters in their building.
- Residents commented that Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) would be the most trusted source to provide information and guidance about fire safety. In addition, residents commented that they would prefer to receive this information face to face (i.e. during meetings or visits), via the internet and social media or through posters and leaflets.
- Based on previous research completed by the Fuel Poverty Action Group, it was anticipated that residents may have experienced issues with cold homes due to cladding being removed but not yet replaced. However, this did not seem to be a significant issue to residents responding to this survey, with the majority of residents commenting that they were able to keep their home warm during the cold winter months. Questions related to the health and wellbeing impact of the Grenfell Tower fire were linked with the cold homes question. This means that only residents who said they experienced problems heating their home were asked questions about health impact. It is well researched that cold homes can impact negatively on respiratory and cardiovascular health, and the small number of residents who had issues heating their home also felt that their cold home had a negative impact on these conditions. Residents who completed this section of the survey also commented on their mental health and wellbeing during the period following the Grenfell Tower fire. In addition, many residents commented on their mental health and wellbeing in other parts of the survey. Residents

commented on feelings of stress, anxiety and worry. It is recommended that more work is completed in this area to understand the impact fully.

- Residents discussed the financial impact they are experiencing because of fire safety remedial work at great length. Residents commented that they are experiencing financial problems because of increasing costs and they are feeling worried and anxious about how they will be able to afford increasing costs. Residents who own their property commented on how they are finding it difficult to sell their flat, which makes them feel 'trapped', and how this is also negatively impacting on relationships and their overall wellbeing.

It is recommended that the following activities are considered as a result of the findings of this survey:

- High Rise Task Force members review this report and findings;
- Produce a summary report, which can be circulated with residents and other stakeholders who are interested in the research findings;
- Produce an action plan of what will be completed as a result of the research findings. This should be compiled into a 'you said, we did' style document to be shared with residents so they can understand that actions are being taken following the feedback they provided;
- Further research to explore the findings in more detail. The direction of this research should be agreed amongst members of this High Rise Task Force;
- Consider exploring the mental health and wellbeing impact on residents living in high rise buildings. Residents shared examples of where their mental health and wellbeing has been negatively impacted, and further research using interviews or focus groups with residents could help understand this impact better.

Appendix A – Survey Questions

Question No.	Data Item	Notes
Q1	What is the name of the building where you live?	Free text; mandatory question
Q2	Do you own or rent your home?	7 categories; mandatory question
Q3	How many floors are in your building?	6 categories; mandatory question
Q4	Which floor do you live on?	6 categories
Q5	How long have you lived in your flat?	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q6(a)	Does your building have cladding?	3 categories, mandatory question
Q6(b)	If yes, has a fire risk assessment identified the cladding as a risk?	3 categories
Q7	Are you concerned about having a fire in your home?	3 categories
Q8	How likely do you think you are to have a fire in your home?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q9	Do you think you are more or less likely to have a fire in your home compared to other people?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q10	Do you take any measures to prevent fire in your home?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q11(a)	Do you have working smoke alarms fitted in your home?	3 categories; mandatory question
Q11(b)	If yes, how often do you test your smoke alarms?	6 categories
Q12(a)	Is there a fire alarm in your building?	3 categories
Q12(b)	If yes, does the fire alarm extend into your flat?	3 categories
Q13	If your building has a fire alarm, have you heard the fire alarm being tested?	4 categories
Q14(a)	Have you even sought advice about fire safety and fire prevention?	2 categories
Q14(b)	If yes, who did you get this advice from?	8 categories, plus free text box
Q15	Who would you trust most to provide information about fire safety and fire prevention?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q16	Which format would you prefer to use to access fire safety and fire prevention advice?	7 categories, plus free text box
Q17	How regularly do you receive information from your landlord or managing agent about fire safety procedures in your block?	5 categories
Q18	Do you know the evacuation procedure for your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q19(a)	Do you feel able to evacuate safely in the event of a fire?	3 categories

Q19(b)	If no, have you discussed this with your landlord or managing agent?	3 categories
Q19(c)	If you have discussed this with your landlord or managing agent, what advice did they provide?	Free text
Q20(a)	Have you participated in a fire drill in your building?	3 categories
Q20(b)	If yes, when did the last fire drill in your building take place?	4 categories
Q21	Do you know where the assembly points are for your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q22	Are there frequent obstructions within the communal areas of your building?	2 categories, plus free text box
Q23	Is there anything else you would like to tell us about fire safety in your building?	Free text box
Q24	During the cold winter months, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your flat?	3 categories, plus free text box; mandatory question
Q25	How did your indoor temperature last winter compare with the winter before?	3 categories
Q26(a)	Has anyone living in the property ever experienced any respiratory conditions, cardiovascular conditions and/or arthritis?	2 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q26(b)	If yes, do you think your housing environment impacts on your health?	3 categories, plus free text box
Q27	Do you think your indoor home environment has an impact on your mental health and wellbeing?	3 categories, plus 'prefer not to say' and free text box
Q28	Over the past 18 months, has any of the following been done in your building?	5 categories, plus free text box
Q29	Over the past 18 months, has your service charge:	5 categories
Q30	Over the past 18 months, has your rent:	5 categories
Q31	Over the past 18 months, have your insurance premiums:	5 categories
Q32	Over the past 18 months, have you experienced any issues related to service charge, rent or insurance premium costs	4 categories, plus free text box
Q33	Over the past 18 months, have you tried to sell or re-mortgage your home?	3 categories, plus free text box
Q34	Age	8 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q35	Ethnic group	18 categories plus 'prefer not to say'
Q36	Religion	8 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q37	Gender	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q38	Trans/transgender identity	3 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'

Q39	Sexual orientation	5 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q40	Disability	7 categories, plus 'prefer not to say'
Q41	Lastly, how did you hear about this survey	7 categories, plus free text box
Q42	If you wish to participate in future research, please tell us your contact details and we will be in touch to discuss further	3 categories, all free text boxes