FIRE SAFETY IN SPECIALIZED HOUSING

...the DRAFT guidance
Why a new guide?

- Changing landscape of social care
- Limited guidance for specialized housing
- Enforcement issues
- Inappropriate fire risk assessments
- Lack of understanding of ‘stay put’ and associated fire alarm strategy
- Need for person-centred approach
THE GUIDE: INTRODUCTION

Fire safety in specialized housing
FIRE SAFETY IN SPECIALIZED HOUSING

• A sister guide to the “Flats Guide”
• Scope includes:
  – Sheltered housing
  – Extra care housing
  – Supported housing
• Should not try to exclude these types of premises by changing the name
• Applies to England and Wales but principles can be applied in NI. Does not apply to Scotland
PART A:
FIRES IN SPECIALIZED HOUSING AND THEIR IMPACT
## RELATIVE RISK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of people living in sheltered housing</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of domestic fire deaths in sheltered housing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of housing stock comprising sheltered housing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of domestic fires in sheltered housing stock</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FATALITIES PER MILLION POPULATION

- General Population: 4.8
- 65 - 79 year olds: 7.9
- 80 years and over: 17.8
FIRES CONFINED TO ITEM OR ROOM OF ORIGIN

- Dwellings generally: 55%
- Sheltered/extra care housing: 96%
PERCENTAGE FIRES AND FATALITIES IN SHELTERED HOUSING BY ITEM FIRST IGNITED

- Fires/fatalities - smokers materials: 79%
- Fires/fatalities - clothing/textiles: 52%
- Fires/fatalities - furniture and furnishings: 20%
CONCLUSIONS FROM RISK DATA AND EXPERIENCE

• Vulnerable residents are at high risk
• Justification for high level of monitored smoke/heat detection
• Fire suppression for all new sheltered/extra care and high risk supported housing
• Detection/suppression may not save resident in room of origin
CONCLUSIONS FROM RISK DATA AND EXPERIENCE

• Need for person-centred approach
• High reliance placed on fire prevention
• Possible need for personal protection suppression
PART B: FIRE SAFETY – HOW SPECIALIZED HOUSING DIFFERS FROM OTHER RESIDENCES
PART B: FIRE SAFETY – HOW SPECIALIZED HOUSING DIFFERS FROM OTHER RESIDENCES

• Longer evacuation time
• Some residents may need assistance with evacuation
• Cannot expect staff in sheltered housing
• Limited staff assistance in extra care
• Limited staff assistance in supported housing, so may need suppression
• Remote monitoring essential in sheltered housing
PART C: THE LAW GOVERNING FIRE SAFETY IN SPECIALIZED HOUSING
THE LAW

• Fire Safety Order only applies to common parts, but includes flat entrance doors and monitored detection in residents’ accommodation
• Overlap of Housing Act and Fire Safety Order
• Primary authority partnerships might be appropriate
• Compartmentation in roof voids likely to fall within the scope of existing legislation
PART D:
THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH
THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

• High risk residents need person-centred FRA.
• Only certain residents in sheltered/extra care. Can be all residents in supported housing.
• Person-centred FRA considers:
  – Resident contribution to likelihood of fire/fire development
  – Capacity of resident to respond to fire alarm or sign of fire
  – Ability of resident to escape
THE PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH

• May need additional measures such as:
  – Fire prevention measures
  – Enhanced fire protection (e.g. detection/suppression)
  – Referral to Adult Social Care
• Need should be identified by anyone who engages with residents
• Non-specialists can be trained
• An appendix provides a template
The person-centred FRA is **NOT** the building FRA
PART E:
FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SPECIALIZED HOUSING PREMISES
FRA FOR SPECIALIZED HOUSING PREMISES

• Does not include person-centred approach
• However, need to consider, at least, generic resident issues
• In supported housing, needs to consider evacuation of residents
• Compliance with Building Regulations may not be sufficient
• Same types of FRAs as for flats
PART F:
PREVENTING FIRES IN THE BUILDING
FIRE PREVENTION

• Prevention of fire particularly critical
• Some individuals may need a person-centred approach
• Normal domestic fire safety advice plus:
  – Hoarding (appendix shows clutter rating scale)
  – Medical gases
  – Mobility scooters
MOBILITY SCOOTERS

• CFOA producing separate guidance
• Increase in use creating problems with storage and charging
• Fires can release large volumes of smoke and generate significant heat outputs
• Common causes include:
  – Arson
  – Electrical wiring
  – Charging equipment
MOBILITY SCOOTERS

Hierarchy of options for storage and charging:

• External parking
• External storage
• Purpose designed internal storage rooms
• Internal area enclosed in fire-resisting construction
• Existing fire-resisting room
• Designated areas of corridor
• Residents own accommodation
• Common corridors and stairways
PART G: MANAGING FIRE RISK – FIRE PROTECTION FOR THE PERSON
PERSON-CENTRED FIRE PREVENTION

Examples:
• Safer ash trays
• Smoking aprons
• Fire retardant bedding
• Fire retardant nightwear
• Cooker isolation devices
• Safer heaters
• Ignition resistant furniture and furnishings
PERSON-CENTRED PROTECTION MEASURES

• Category LD1 Fire Protection with monitoring
• Fire suppression – specific room
• Fire suppression – entire accommodation
• Fire suppression – personal protection watermist
• Vibrating pads/visual alarms
• Voice sounders for certain residents
• Fire doors
• Alternative accommodation or additional support
PART H: MANAGING FIRE RISK – FIRE PROTECTION FOR THE BUILDING
COMPARTMENTATION: SHELTERED AND EXTRA CARE

• Effective compartmentation is fundamental to support ‘stay put’ policy
• Particular attention should be given to floors, walls and roof voids
• Should not rely on a fire-resisting ceiling in lieu of roof void compartmentation
COMPARTMENTATION: SHELTERED AND EXTRA CARE

Compartment walls between flats contain the fire
Non-fire-resisting ceiling
Flat and roof void form a single fire compartment
COMPARTMENTATION: SHELTERED AND EXTRA CARE

[Diagram showing compartments with labels for Flat A to Flat H, and notes on fire-resisting ceilings and cavity barriers.]

- Single space between cavity barriers
- Roof
- Cavity barriers
- Fire-resisting ceilings do not prevent downward spread of fire
COMPARTMENTATION: SUPPORTED HOUSING

• Unlikely to be present or required
• For new build, would need FR for ceilings (15/30/60)
• Lath and plaster satisfactory for up to three storeys
• Above three storeys, upgrade unless there is AFS
• No cavity barriers, other than around stairway serving three or more storeys (or AFD, or FR ceiling)
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SHELTERED HOUSING

Common parts

- Generally as ADB

- 7.5m (or up to 10m) between flat entrance door and nearest fire door for all new build and ultimate objective for existing premises
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SHELTERED HOUSING

Flat entrance doors

• Notional FD30 acceptable:
  – In smaller schemes
  – Where FRS attendance time is short, and monitored LD1 detection provided
  – Where flats are protected by suppression

• In other cases, upgrade or replace doors in larger schemes as long term plan (e.g. during refurbishment)
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

- Most premises akin to single-family dwellings
- ‘Stay put’ not suitable
- Needs careful assessment of staffing level/resident vulnerability
- Very high risk may necessitate additional AFD, upgrading of fire doors and suppression
- Need for non-institutional environment
- If low risk (as defined), MoE as per shared house, provided AFD is as per guide
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

Single storey properties

• No fire doors unless evacuation prolonged
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

Two storey, low risk properties:
• **Might** consider escape windows
• Otherwise, protected stairway
  – Lath and plaster satisfactory
  – Solid doors (15-20 min) acceptable
  – Hollow core or thin panel doors need replaced
  – No self-closing devices
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

Two storey properties (not low risk): Protected stairway

- 30 minute construction
- Notional FD30 doors
- Doors to kitchens and lounges self-closing
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

Three storey properties (low risk): Protected stairway

- Lath and plaster satisfactory
- Solid doors (15-20 min) acceptable
- Hollow core or thin panel doors need replaced
- Doors to kitchens and lounges self-closing
MEANS OF ESCAPE IN SUPPORTED HOUSING

Three storey properties (not low risk): Protected stairway

• 30 minute construction (unless suppression)
• Notional FD30 doors (unless suppression)
• All fire-resisting doors self-closing
• Upgrade/replace doors to FD30S if prolonged evacuation
FIRE DETECTION FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING

• Generally Category LD1
• Omit detection from kitchens if integral with lounge or inner rooms
• No detection in cupboards or roof voids (unless significant fire hazards in roof void)
FIRE DETECTION FOR SUPPORTED HOUSING

• Grade D for single storey and properties with no more than four bedrooms
• All smoke alarms interlinked
• Standby battery tamper proof unless staff present
• Grade A for properties of two or more storeys and more than four bedrooms
FIRE DETECTION IN SHELTERED HOUSING: INDIVIDUAL FLATS

- Category LD1 for flats in all new premises and ultimate objective for flats in existing premises
- Telecare monitoring of detection in all flats, regardless of occupant characteristic
FIRE DETECTION IN SHELTERED HOUSING: COMMON PARTS

• No system where there are no communal facilities
• Otherwise, detection in common parts/communal facilities or where combustible materials in common parts
• Detection systems to incorporate MCPs
• SPL in flats not more than 45dB(A)
AUTOMATIC SUPPRESSION IN SPECIALIZED HOUSING

- Sprinkler or watermist systems
- Recommended for all new sheltered/extra care and high risk supported housing
- Maybe a compensating feature
- Duplicate pumps
- Standby power supply
FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT
FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT

• One organization takes the lead
• Responsibilities matrix to be completed (example format provided)
• Engagement with residents critical
• Premises information boxes for sheltered and extra care
Any questions?
WRITTEN COMMENTS

• Please use template for comments
• Please propose exact wording for any amendments
• Send to spechousing@cstodd.co.uk