



Fire Safety in Shared Hallways, Stairwells, Landings and Passages

This document represents Connect Housing’s policy on maintaining safe routes of escape in housing types where there are shared access routes and areas. The document provides guidance for tenants as to what is, and is not, acceptable in terms of furnishing and decorating such shared areas and routes.

The Association does maintain a **No Smoking** policy in all common areas and this **MUST** be adhered to.

The hazards presented by fire and smoke must not be underestimated. It is well known that people unfortunate enough to be caught up in a house fire can quickly become disorientated by thick smoke, and can struggle to exit a building which otherwise they know well. The purpose of this policy is to set down rules which:

- a) Maintain safe routes of escape, and
- b) Minimise the risk of smoke in such areas.

In particular, please follow these guidelines

Stopping the spread of Smoke and Fire	Protecting the means of Escape
Soft furnishings or any other object of material that is combustible (including festive decorations), must NOT be placed in shared areas, even if they are made from fire retardant material, as if they are set on fire they will give off noxious fumes	All escape routes MUST be kept clear.
Artificial plants must not be placed in shared areas, for the same reason as above. Natural plants may be put in places where they will not cause a trip hazard or otherwise obstruct the route of escape	It is NOT PERMITTED to store furniture, rubbish, electric scooters, boxes or other articles in such shared areas.
Pictures may be hung on walls, but should be securely fixed. Notice boards may be provided so long as they have a glass or Perspex cover	Do not obstruct fire exits. Please report any damage or vandalism to fire exit doors.

<p>Only electrical equipment provided by the Association may be used in shared areas (eg. fixed electric heaters). It is NOT permitted to charge electric scooters in shared areas, as this causes both an obstruction and a fire risk.</p>	<p>Mats or rugs should not be placed outside the entrance door to your flat, as they could cause a trip hazard in the event of a fire.</p>
<p>Do NOT prop open doors in common and shared areas. These are fire doors which are designed to stop the spread of smoke and fire. Please report any faulty door closers.</p>	
<p>Refuse Collection points should be kept as clear as possible. ALL rubbish to be deposited in the bins provided and any large items should be stored externally and a request made to the Local Authority to collect</p>	

The Association regularly carries out inspections of communal and shared spaces to ensure that they are free from fire risks and obstructions. We may write to you where there are persistent issues of concern, or in extreme cases remove articles without notice, where these are causing an obstruction or fire hazard.

Periodically, the Fire Authority may also carry out an inspection of the common and shared areas to check they are in a safe condition.

Each year, we review the Fire Safety Risk Assessment of the common and shared areas in conjunction with the Association's Fire Safety contractor, to identify any issues of concern.

Arson, can be a particular problem in these areas, extra vigilance must be taken when these areas are being used and what is stored in them, It is the duty of the tenants to report incidents and regular occurrences of illegal entry and all doors should be kept locked at all times.