The Holistic Approach to Fire Safety Management of Housing Stock
Adopting a Best Practise approach
Adopting a Best Practise approach

Fire & Rescue Services primary functions

• Protection – Fire Safety
• Prevention – Education and information
• Emergency Response - Information for emergency responders
Adopting a Best Practise approach

Protection – Fire Safety

- Fire Risk Assessment (Suitable & Sufficient)
- Action plan (Risk based delivery)
- Sourcing materials & products
- Installation of fire protection systems
- Final audit
Adopting a Best Practise approach

Prevention – Education and information

• Requirement to educate and inform residents

• Fire & Rescue Services primary KPIs

• Home Fire Safety Visits
Adopting a Best Practise approach

Emergency Response – Information for responders

Requirement to provide information to emergency responders regarding dangerous substances.

Provision of general information.

• Building layout

• Flats layout

• Location of

• Hydrant, water inlet/landing outlets, lift motor rooms
South Essex Homes is the ALMO for Southend on Sea Borough Council set up in October 2005

- We manage some 6200 rented properties with a further 500 leasehold units
- 8% of our stock is pre-1945 with the rest post 1945 with the majority constructed in the 1950’s and 60’s
- We have 22 sheltered schemes representing 25% of the stock, but unusually have 13 high rise blocks containing a total of 1115 flats
Our Approach

Diagnosis  Design  Delivery
Diagnosis

Major investment to High Rise Blocks

- Planned & Cyclical Maintenance
- High stock condition information
- ASB issues (Arson)
- Responsive repairs – excessive costs
- DDA issues
- Concerns raised by Fire and Rescue Services
- Comprehensive In-house Fire Risk Assessments
- Difficult to let flats – tenant perception
- Negative publicity
Top headlines

‘Families flee flats inferno’ (Taken from the Southend Echo 29/6/04)

‘Rubbish fire at flats in Southend’ (Taken from the Southend Echo 11/6/09)

‘Fire tackled in stairway of Southend flats’ (Taken from the Southend Echo 7/3/12)

‘Call for sprinkler system at flats after rubbish set alight’ (Taken from the Southend Echo 8/5/12)
A holistic approach to the project

• Meetings with stakeholders to identify problems/solutions
  • Residents
  • Leaseholders
  • Essex Fire and Rescue
  • Essex Police
  • Health and Safety Officer
  • Asset Management
  • Maintenance and Repairs Teams
Selection of materials and products to achieve –

- 1 Hour fire protection to landing areas
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Hour fire protection to flats
- Class O treatment to communal areas
- Sprinkler installation to bin rooms
- Smoke vents to communal areas
- Fire Signage
- DDA Compliance
- Roof security against pirate radio H system
Delivery

- Pilot study identified as Bewley Court
- Resident Consultation
- Ongoing consultation with stakeholders throughout the project
- Leaseholders included 100%
- Partnership working with Essex Fire and Rescue and Manufacturers
Outcomes with the Holistic Approach to Fire Safety Management

- Planned & Cyclical Maintenance – works reduced
- High stock condition information
- ASB issues reduced
- Reduced repair costs
- DDA compliance
- Recognition of project by Sir Ken Knight, Chief Fire Advisor to Her Majesties Government. Covered by National Press
- Residents perception improved and flats easier to let
- Residents perception improved and flats easier to let
- Positive Publicity
- Works to satisfaction of Essex Fire & Rescue
- Outcomes

Comprehensive Fire Risk Assessments with regular reviews

Planned & Cyclical Maintenance – works reduced
Before and After examples

Excessive gap under existing doors

New doors with drop down seals
Before and After examples

Landing screens with broken glass

Replacement screens
Before and After examples

Fire outside existing dry riser door

GERDA door repaired after similar fire
GERDA FD30S following attack – glass smashed but did not fail
Any Questions?