



**GREATER
MANCHESTER**
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Your Reference

Our Reference HighRIse/ResidentsBalconyJune23

Contact highrise@manchesterfire.gov.uk

Chief Fire Officer

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www.manchesterfire.gov.uk

Residents in Greater Manchester

Date 11th June 2023

Dear Resident,

Re: Balcony Fire Safety Advice

I am writing on behalf of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) to ask for your co-operation in staying safe from fire this summer.

I am sure you are enjoying the warm weather and hoping to make the most of it as it is forecast to continue for most of June. In recent years we have seen a number of fires which have started on balconies during periods of good weather and many of you will remember dramatic photos of balcony fires which have occurred in Greater Manchester and other areas of the country.

In previous summers we have seen fires involving balconies caused by the use of disposable barbecues, cigarettes thrown from balconies and even a resident burning some paperwork. This weekend our Firefighters have attended two fires on balconies caused by cigarettes which have been dropped into dry plant pots and then started a fire.

In order to reduce the risk of fires and to ensure the safety of your and your neighbours I would like to ask you not to use barbecues or any other form of open fire on balconies. They can be extremely dangerous and pose a real risk of fire due to the close proximity to the buildings. If you have a wooden balcony the risk is even greater. If you smoke please make sure you extinguish cigarettes properly in an ashtray and do not drop them from your balcony.

In order to reduce the risk of a fire occurring this summer, please follow our balcony fire safety advice:

- × Do not use barbecues, chimineas, fire pits or any other form of open fire on a balcony.
- × Never store or set off fireworks or flares on your balcony.
- × Never store flammable materials on your balcony.
- × Never throw cigarettes off your balcony – they can cause a fire on someone else's balcony. Use a suitable ashtray and dispose of the contents safely.

The best way to stay safe is by taking steps to prevent a fire happening in your home. Most fires in people's homes are caused by cooking or smoking – by taking some simple steps you can reduce the risk of a fire starting – this protects you, your family and your home.

How to prevent a fire

DO

- ✓ Keep tea towels and clothes away from the cooker and hob.
- ✓ Keep matches, lighters and candles out of reach of children
- ✓ Unplug appliances when you're not using them, they are fully charged, or when you go to bed.
- ✓ Be careful with candles and tea lights – don't put them near material that can catch fire or where they can be knocked over
- ✓ Always put cigarettes out properly in an ashtray and never smoke in bed

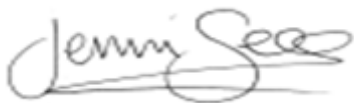
DONT

- ✗ Leave cooking unattended
- ✗ Overload plug sockets or extension leads
- ✗ Leave appliances on when sleeping or when you go out – this includes washing machines, dryers and dishwashers
- ✗ Leave candles unattended
- ✗ Leave e-bikes or scooters in your hall and never charge them overnight or when you are out

You can find information about home safety in flats on our website www.manchesterfire.gov.uk or (search 'GMFRS 'flat fire safety advice' online) or by calling us on 0800 555 815 Monday to Friday.

If you notice another resident in your block not following this fire safety advice in the first instance please contact your landlord or the managing agent for the building. If you still have concerns let us know by emailing highrise@manchesterfire.gov.uk detailing your concerns.

Yours faithfully,



Jenni Seex
Head of Protection and Building Safety Reform
Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service