

Introduction

Section 84 of the Building Safety Act 2022 requires accountable persons (APs) [link to existing page] to take all reasonable steps to prevent building safety risks from happening and to reduce their seriousness if they do.

It also requires APs to “act in accordance with prescribed principles”. Those principles will be listed in regulations. We will be publishing a document which gives more detail on each of the principles in the regulations.

These pages will help APs meet their legal duties.

We have prepared examples of common situations APs may find in existing buildings and what they could do to demonstrate they have taken all reasonable steps.

They do not require specific action to be taken – other than an investigation or assessment – as what is reasonable will depend on the situation. They do provide options that APs can consider, and, in some cases, you may need to do more than one thing to demonstrate you have taken all reasonable steps.

Although each example deals with a specific issue, managing building safety risks will require you to think about the range of measures you have in place and how they work together to prevent and mitigate risks. The examples published here are not an exhaustive list of situations you may find when assessing building safety risks, there will be others that you will need to consider.

Benchmarks

The standards in many existing buildings will be different to those required if it was to be built today.

The Building Safety Act does not require APs to bring every building up to modern standards. However, the new regime will require APs to demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable steps to meet their duties under the Act.

This is more than saying that the building was built to the standards in place at the time. The building may have changed since then – for example because it has been refurbished. There may also be other things APs can reasonably do.

The is included in Section 84 of the Act where it says that the steps needed, “may in particular involve the

accountable person carrying out works to the part of the building for which they are responsible”.

You will need to assess building safety risks to meet the duty under Section 83 of the Act. As part of this, you should consider what more would be reasonable to do. This does not automatically mean that expensive and extensive work will be required – there may be simple steps that can be taken.

The following pages describe examples of the situations that can be regularly found in existing buildings. They provide examples of investigations and improvements you could consider but do not require you to take specific action. What is reasonable will depend on the specific circumstances.

In each case, a flowchart takes you through the problem. Each example provides background and sets out possible causes. They then go on to describe short-term responses – which is often investigating what the problem actually is – provide examples of longer-term actions to consider, and actions you could take to manage or prevent the issue happening again. We will add links to the specific principles related to the example once the regulations have been published.

You will find further information on the possible actions in other published documents such as [Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats](#).

Residents

Whatever action you take or are considering taking, make sure you engage with your residents about building safety issues.

Further guidance will be published on resident engagement in due course, but remember, engagement is more than just telling people what you are going to do.

Updating the information about your building

When you make assessments, investigations or changes to your building, make sure you update its golden thread of information. Information relating to building safety forms part of the building’s safety case and its safety case report. When you make changes, consider whether the safety case report needs to be updated.