



EVACUATION POLICY

Carlton Hill, LS7 1EA

unipol

Registered Office
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Legal Compliance and Regulatory Alignment

To ensure full compliance with current legislation and best practice, this evacuation policy is aligned with:

- **The Building Safety Act 2022**, including:
 - Section 73–74: Duties of the Principal Accountable Person (PAP)
 - Section 75–76: Safety case report and risk management
 - Section 77–78: Resident engagement and information sharing
 - Section 79–80: Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR)
- **Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022**, including:
 - Regulation 7: Routine fire door inspections
 - Regulation 8: Installation and maintenance of wayfinding signage
 - Regulation 9: Provision and upkeep of Premises Information Boxes
 - Regulation 10: Resident fire safety information
 - Regulation 11: Information sharing with Fire and Rescue Services
- **Government guidance** from *Fire Safety in Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats*, including:
 - Principles of compartmentation and Stay Put strategy
 - Fire risk assessment methodology (PAS 79)
 - Management of vulnerable persons and inclusive evacuation planning
 - Maintenance of fire safety systems and escape routes

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1. Evacuation Strategy

1.1 Stay Put vs. Simultaneous Evacuation

The primary evacuation strategy for Carlton Hill is a Stay Put approach for the residential accommodation. This means that in the event of a fire, only the occupants of the apartment or cluster where the fire originates are expected to evacuate. All other residents are advised to remain in their apartments unless directly affected by fire or smoke or instructed otherwise by the Fire Service. This strategy is supported by a high level of compartmentation, sprinkler protection, and smoke ventilation systems, which are designed to contain fire and smoke within the area of origin. In contrast, ancillary areas such as the gym, communal amenity spaces, sky gardens, and plant rooms operate under a Simultaneous Evacuation strategy, where all occupants in the affected area evacuate upon alarm activation.

1.2 Phased Evacuation

Phased evacuation is not applicable to the residential areas of Carlton Hill due to the Stay Put strategy. However, in ancillary areas where simultaneous evacuation is required, the building's fire alarm system is zoned to ensure that only the affected area is evacuated. For example, activation of fire detection in a sky garden or plant room will trigger evacuation of that specific zone without affecting other parts of the building. Fire and smoke curtains provide active compartmentation to isolate affected areas, and the fire alarm cause and effect matrix ensures that evacuation signals are targeted and controlled.

1.3 Evacuation Alert Systems

Carlton Hill is equipped with a Category L1 fire detection and alarm system throughout the building, designed in accordance with BS 5839-1. In residential areas, the system is zoned per cluster to support the Stay Put strategy and prevent unnecessary evacuation. Sounders are installed within apartments to meet audibility requirements ($\geq 75\text{dBA}$ at bedhead), but no sounders or manual call points are provided in residential corridors to avoid confusion. In ancillary areas, sounders and manual call points are installed on escape routes and final exits. Rooftop areas and sky gardens are equipped with audible and visual alarms, and sound levels are carefully controlled to avoid exceeding 45dBA in adjacent apartments. Fire alarm panels are located at the main reception and repeated in each block, with zone plans provided for fire service use.

1.4 Refuges

Carlton Hill does not include designated refuge areas within the residential accommodation due to the Stay Put strategy and the building's design, which facilitates self-evacuation. However, the common corridors and stair landings are constructed with fire-resisting materials and are considered suitable as temporary waiting areas for residents with mobility impairments. The building includes firefighter lifts in Blocks B, C, and D, which are intended to remain in service during a fire unless recalled due to smoke detection in the lift shaft or designated landing. This allows non-ambulant residents to make a dignified escape. The fire strategy also recommends that the Responsible Person maintain up-to-date records of vulnerable residents and liaise with local fire services to support rescue prioritisation.

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1.5 Risk Assessments

A comprehensive fire risk assessment was carried out at Carlton Hill Residences on 18 August 2025 by a qualified fire safety assessor. The property comprises four purpose-built blocks of student accommodation, housing 606 residents across 88 flats. The building, constructed post-2010, reaches up to 15 storeys and includes a range of communal facilities. The assessment focused on the common parts of the building and was informed by visual inspections and fire strategy documentation.

Key fire safety risks identified included the need for adjustments to some fire doors, which are scheduled for remediation by the original contractors. Electrical safety was also highlighted, with mitigation in place through regular testing of fixed installations (EICR) and portable appliances (PAT). The risk of arson was considered low due to robust site security measures, including electronic access control, CCTV coverage, and a strict no-smoking policy.

To manage and mitigate fire risks, Carlton Hill is equipped with extensive passive and active fire protection systems. Each block features protected staircases and lobbies, automatic opening vents, and dry risers to support fire service operations. The building benefits from compartmentation through fire-resistant walls and doors, ensuring containment in the event of a fire. Active systems include sprinklers, fire curtains, smoke extraction and ventilation, emergency lighting, and a fully addressable L1+M fire alarm system. All systems are subject to regular servicing and maintenance, with records available on site.

Operationally, the site maintains a 24/7 staff presence, with trained personnel available to support residents and respond to emergencies. Escape routes are clearly signed and unobstructed, and the building follows a “Stay Put” evacuation strategy, supported by its fire-resistant design and safety systems. The fire risk was assessed as “Tolerable,” with a medium likelihood of fire and slight potential harm, indicating strong compliance with fire safety regulations and best practices.

1.6 Mandatory Occurrence Reporting

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR) is a legal requirement for High-Risk Buildings (HRBs). These are defined as buildings that are at least 18 metres in height or have seven or more storeys and contain two or more residential units. Unipol Student Homes, acting as the Principal Accountable Person (PAP), has implemented a MOR system to ensure that any safety occurrences—defined as incidents or risks that could cause serious harm—are promptly identified, assessed, and reported to the Building Safety Regulator (BSR).

A safety occurrence must be reported if it has caused, or is likely to cause, the death or serious injury of a significant number of people, structural failure of the building, or the spread of fire or smoke within the building. Examples of reportable occurrences include total or partial building collapse, failure of critical fire safety systems such as fire doors or smoke extraction, use of non-compliant or defective construction materials, fire safety issues likely to result in fire spread, and faults in the design or installation of safety systems. A comprehensive list of examples is provided in Appendix 2 of the MOR Guidance Document.

To facilitate reporting, all residents, employees, contractors, and building users can raise safety concerns via email at buildingsafety@unipol.org.uk, by phone at 0113 205 3436, or through the online form available on the Unipol Building Safety webpage. Posters and leaflets are displayed throughout HRBs to raise awareness of the MOR process and encourage participation.

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Once a report is received, the Compliance and Facilities Team will investigate the occurrence within three days, aiming to notify the BSR within 24 hours if the criteria for reporting are clearly met. A full report must be submitted to the BSR within ten days. All safety occurrences are logged, even if they do not meet the threshold for formal notification.

During refurbishment works in HRBs, the Principal Designer (PD) and/or Principal Contractor (PC) are required to maintain a MOR system throughout the project. This system must be submitted as part of the building application process and be available for inspection by the BSR at any time.

The MOR system is reviewed annually or sooner if triggered by an incident or changes in legislation. Training is provided to staff and contractors to ensure they understand the reporting process and their responsibilities. If there is any uncertainty about whether an issue qualifies as a safety occurrence, individuals are encouraged to contact the Compliance and Facilities Team for guidance and support.

2. Evacuation Procedures

2.1 General Evacuation Instructions

In the event of a fire at Carlton Hill, residents must follow clear and structured evacuation procedures to ensure their safety. If the fire alarm sounds within your flat, you should immediately check for signs of fire. Do not open any doors that may conceal a fire—touch the door first to check if it feels warm. If a fire is confirmed, evacuate the building immediately using the nearest escape route and call the Fire Service on 999, quoting the building address: Carlton Hill, City Centre, LS7 1EA.

When evacuating, residents must leave their apartment promptly, ensuring all doors are closed behind them to help contain the fire. The use of lifts is strictly prohibited during an evacuation; instead, residents must use the staircases to exit the building. If you happen to be in a lift when the alarm sounds, the system will automatically return the lift to the ground floor, allowing you to exit safely.

Once outside, residents should proceed in the direction of Carlton Hill barracks and gather at the designated assembly point opposite the site car park on Lofthouse Terrace. It is essential to remain at the assembly point and await further instructions from Unipol staff or the attending fire and rescue service.

In communal areas, continuous sounding of the alarm indicates the need for immediate evacuation. Some flats are equipped with interlinking doors to neighbouring flats to reduce exit distances; these doors will automatically open during a fire alarm activation to facilitate safe egress.

Residents should also be aware of different scenarios that may trigger evacuation, such as fires originating in communal spaces, kitchens, or at various times of day. Regardless of the situation, if there is any uncertainty about the presence of fire, do not take risks—call 999 immediately.

2.2 Building Management

In the event of an evacuation, the Building Manager at Carlton Hill plays a central role in coordinating the response. The Building Manager, currently Peter Hughes, is responsible for overseeing fire safety procedures, ensuring all personnel are trained, and liaising with emergency services. During an evacuation, the Building Manager must take note of all persons present at the assembly point, maintain order, and ensure that no one re-enters the building until it is declared safe by the Fire

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Service. Residents can contact the Building Manager directly with any concerns related to fire safety or evacuation procedures. Additional support is provided by the Operations Manager and Operations Director, whose contact details are listed in the Fire Safety Management Plan.

2.3 Where Residents Require Additional Support

Carlton Hill supports residents who may need assistance during an evacuation through a proactive and structured approach. The University of Leeds provides Unipol with an Access document identifying students who may require a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). Residents with disabilities, medical conditions, or mobility impairments are invited to complete a Tenant Fire Risk Assessment (TFRA), which informs the development of a PEEP. Consent is obtained before sharing any information with staff or emergency services, and completed plans are stored digitally and in the Premises Information Box.

Building Managers and Customer Service Assistants are trained in First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, and Safeguarding, and are encouraged to identify and support vulnerable residents. Awareness is also promoted via digital signage as part of the #happyliving campaign.

All residents are expected to meet the University's English language requirements, ensuring they can understand fire safety instructions. However, staff remain alert to any communication barriers. During an evacuation, trained staff and fire wardens assist residents to refuge points and, where safe and possible, support their evacuation.

2.4 Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments at Carlton Hill are carried out regularly by qualified professionals and reviewed following any significant changes to the building. These assessments identify risks such as blocked escape routes, damaged fire doors, and fire hazards, with mitigation measures including routine inspections, maintenance, and clear wayfinding signage.

Fire doors are checked frequently, and any faults are promptly addressed. Staff are trained to keep escape routes clear and ensure fire safety equipment remains functional.

To support vulnerable residents, the Tenancy Support and Wellbeing Coordinator oversees the creation of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), based on individual Tenant Fire Risk Assessments. These are completed within the first two months of tenancy—typically within the first month—and shared with relevant staff and emergency services, with consent. While no residents are currently identified as high risk, the system remains flexible to accommodate changing needs.

2.5 Fire Warden Role and Responsibilities

Fire Wardens at Carlton Hill are nominated by the Health, Safety and Compliance Manager and receive formal fire safety training. During an evacuation, they sweep assigned areas—including communal spaces—and assist residents, especially those with PEEPs. Wardens wear high-visibility vests and report to the Building Manager at the assembly point to confirm their area is clear or to highlight anyone needing assistance.

They coordinate with the Fire Evacuation Coordinator, ensure escape routes are accessible, and are familiar with the fire alarm panel and zone chart. Fire Wardens must not re-enter the building until it is declared safe by the Fire Service and are required to report any safety concerns as part of the post-incident review.

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2.6 Emergency Services Liaison

In the event of a fire, the Building Manager acts as the primary liaison with emergency services and must immediately provide accurate information, including building layout, fire registers, and PEEPs. These documents are retrieved from the Premises Information Box and handed over by Customer Service Assistants at the assembly point.

During critical incidents, the Operations Director and Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) may support coordination. Staff are trained to secure the site, facilitate access, and maintain clear communication. Only the Fire Service can authorise re-entry to the building.

2.7 Information for Emergency Services

Carlton Hill maintains a Premises Information Box containing essential documents such as floor plans, fire alarm zone charts, PEEPs, and contact details. The building is equipped with a Category L1 fire detection system, clearly marked escape routes, and designated assembly points.

During an incident, the Fire Evacuation Coordinator briefs emergency services on the situation, including any structural concerns and vulnerable residents. Staff are trained to assist responders, provide real-time updates, and preserve evidence such as CCTV footage.

Carlton Hill complies with Regulation 11 of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 by ensuring the Fire and Rescue Service receives:

- Real-time access to PIB contents
- Briefings from the Fire Evacuation Coordinator during incidents
- Updates on vulnerable residents and PEEPs
- Structural and layout information relevant to firefighting operations

Staff are trained to liaise with emergency services and provide CCTV footage, access control override, and site security support.

2.7.1 Premises Information Box (PIB)

Carlton Hill maintains a Premises Information Box in Block B reception, compliant with Regulation 9. The PIB contains:

- Floor plans showing flat locations, escape routes, and fire safety systems
- Fire alarm zone charts and cause/effect matrix
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)
- Contact details for the Building Manager and Fire Safety Team
- Records of fire door inspections and maintenance logs
- Details of firefighting equipment and dry riser locations

The PIB is reviewed quarterly and updated following any changes to building layout, occupancy, or fire safety systems.

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2.7.2 Wayfinding Signage

Carlton Hill complies with Regulation 8 of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 by maintaining BS 5499- and BS 5839-compliant wayfinding signage in all stairwells and escape routes. Signage includes:

- Block and floor identification
- Flat number ranges
- Directional arrows to exits and assembly points

Signage is inspected quarterly and updated following any layout changes. Visual clarity and accessibility are prioritised, including high-contrast formats and tactile elements where appropriate.

2.8 Information for Residents

Residents are provided with comprehensive fire safety information upon moving into their accommodation, including fire notices displayed in bedrooms, kitchens, and communal areas. These notices outline the evacuation strategy, fire alarm scenarios, and the location of assembly points. Tenants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this guidance and the fire safety systems in place, which include smoke detectors, fire blankets, and emergency lighting.

Fire doors play a critical role in preventing the spread of fire and smoke. All fire doors, including flat entrance doors and those in communal areas, are designed to resist fire for a minimum of 30 minutes and must remain closed at all times. These doors are fitted with self-closing devices, intumescent seals, and smoke seals to ensure they function effectively during a fire. Residents must not tamper with or wedge open fire doors, as doing so compromises the safety of the entire building. Any faults or damage to fire doors should be reported immediately to the Building or Property Manager via the tenant portal or email.

Unipol also provides tenants with guidance on preventing false alarms, such as using extractor fans when cooking or showering, avoiding the use of candles, and keeping smoke detectors unobstructed. Tampering with fire safety equipment—including detectors, extinguishers, and signage—is strictly prohibited and may result in legal consequences.

2.8.1 Regulation overview

In line with Regulation 10 of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, all residents receive fire safety information:

- At move-in (via printed and digital formats)
- Through fire notices in bedrooms, kitchens, and communal areas
- Via the Unipol tenant portal and website

Information includes:

- Evacuation strategy (Stay Put or Simultaneous)
- Assembly point location
- Fire door usage and maintenance
- False alarm prevention tips

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- Emergency contact details

Materials are available in plain English, with translation tools and visual aids to support residents with language or cognitive barriers.

2.9 Fire Safety Equipment

Carlton Hill is equipped with a full range of fire safety systems, including extinguishers, fire blankets, smoke curtains, suppression systems (e.g. sprinklers), and a Category L1 automatic fire detection system. AOV smoke vents and emergency lighting support safe evacuation.

Wayfinding signage is clearly displayed in stairwells and escape routes, compliant with BS 5499 and BS 5839 standards. Staff are trained in the safe use of firefighting equipment and instructed not to take unnecessary risks. All equipment is inspected regularly, with maintenance records stored in the Vantify Risk Manager system. Faults must be reported immediately to the Facilities Manager or Building Team.

2.10 Fire Doors

Fire doors at Carlton Hill are essential for maintaining compartmentation and protecting escape routes. All flat entrance and communal doors are fitted with self-closing devices and marked with “Fire Door Keep Shut” signage. Flat entrance doors also include intumescent and smoke seals, fire-resistant hardware, and glazing where applicable.

Communal fire doors are inspected quarterly, in line with legal requirements for buildings over 11 metres in height. Flat entrance doors are checked annually as part of the Standard Inspection process. The frequency of these inspections is in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.

All inspections and outcomes are logged in the Vantify Risk Manager system. Remediation is being undertaken in line with Unipols Passive Fire Protection Policy.

Residents are informed of inspection schedules and advised they must not obstruct or tamper with fire doors, and that they should report any faults or damage immediately to the Building Manager or via the tenant portal.

2.11 Post Evacuation

Following an evacuation, the Building Manager conducts roll call for staff and visitors who have signed in e.g. contractors at the assembly point and liaises with emergency services. It is not possible to account for which students are in the building at any one time or if they may have guests. Re-entry is only permitted once the Fire Service confirms the building is safe. Staff assist vulnerable individuals and escort visitors as needed.

All fire incidents are logged, and a debrief is held within 72 hours to review actions, update procedures, and identify lessons learned. Emotional support is offered to affected tenants and staff, with referrals to wellbeing services where appropriate.

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3. Evacuation Plans and Drills

3.1 Evacuation Plans

Carlton Hill maintains comprehensive and regularly updated evacuation plans to ensure the safety of all residents and staff in the event of a fire. The building comprises four blocks arranged around a central courtyard, each equipped with protected staircases and multiple escape routes. There are seven designated escape points, including exits from stairwells in Blocks A through D, sliding doors in Block B's communal lobby, and direct routes from the gym and courtyard areas. These routes are clearly signposted with compliant wayfinding signage and supported by emergency lighting systems. Up-to-date floor plans detailing escape routes, fire exits, refuge areas, and fire alarm zones are stored in the Premises Information Boxes located in each block, with the main box situated in Block B reception. Fire Warden locations and responsibilities are also documented within these plans. Fire Wardens, nominated and trained by the Health, Safety and Compliance Manager, are assigned specific areas to sweep during evacuations and report to the Building Manager at the assembly point on Lofthouse Terrace. Evacuation plans are reviewed annually or following any significant changes to the building layout, occupancy, or fire safety systems, ensuring they remain accurate and effective in supporting a safe and orderly evacuation.

3.2 Evacuation Drills

Evacuation drills are not conducted at Carlton Hill due to the Fire Alarm system not supporting this, as it is not possible to activate the internal flat fire alarm system from the central panel. As part of the staff training process the building team, including the building Manager and Customer Service Assistants are trained as Fire Wardens. Staff are briefed on their roles during a fire alarm activation requiring evacuation, including sounding alarms, directing residents to the designated assembly point on Lofthouse Terrace, and conducting sweeps of communal areas. To ensure staff understanding tabletop exercises and scenario based training are utilised.

3.3 Training and Communication

Unipol Student Homes ensures that both residents and staff at Carlton Hill receive clear, consistent, and accessible training on evacuation procedures. Staff, including the Building Manager and Customer Service Assistants, are trained in fire safety protocols, evacuation coordination, and support for vulnerable individuals. Upon move-in, tenants are provided with fire safety information displayed in bedrooms, kitchens, and communal areas, and are encouraged to familiarise themselves with escape routes, fire notices, and assembly points. Fire safety guidance is also available online via the Unipol tenant portal and website, ensuring ongoing access to up-to-date information. For residents with disabilities or additional needs, Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are developed in collaboration with the Tenancy Support and Wellbeing Coordinator. These plans are reviewed annually and stored securely, with consent-based sharing with emergency services. To support inclusivity, fire safety communications use plain language, visual signage, and are supplemented with translation tools where needed, ensuring all residents—regardless of language or ability—can understand and act on evacuation procedures.

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4. Review and Continuous Improvement

4.1 Regular Reviews and Updates

To maintain compliance and best practice:

- The evacuation policy is reviewed annually and after any significant incident or regulatory change
- Fire risk assessments follow PAS 79 methodology and are reviewed every 12 months or sooner if required
- Lessons learned from incidents are documented and used to update procedures
- Resident feedback is collected via surveys and informal channels to improve communication and inclusivity

The evacuation policy for Carlton Hill is reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with current fire safety legislation and reflects any changes to the building structure, occupancy, or operational procedures. This review is coordinated by the Health, Safety and Compliance Manager in collaboration with the Building Manager and Operations Team. In addition to the scheduled annual review, the policy is subject to immediate reassessment following any significant incidents, updates to fire safety regulations, or alterations to the building layout or resident profile. Updates to the evacuation strategy—such as changes between Stay Put and Simultaneous Evacuation approaches—are documented and communicated to all stakeholders, including residents, staff, and emergency services. Revised versions of the policy are stored centrally and made accessible via the Premises Information Box and internal systems.

4.2 Record Keeping

Carlton Hill maintains detailed records of all fire safety activities, including evacuation drills, staff training sessions, fire alarm tests, and any incidents or near-misses. These records are logged in the Vantify Risk Manager system, which serves as the central repository for compliance documentation. Training records for Fire Wardens and other personnel are maintained individually and updated following each session. Any fire-related incidents, including false alarms or equipment faults, are recorded and investigated promptly, with outcomes used to inform future safety improvements and shared with the Building Safety Regulator where applicable. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are also maintained for residents requiring additional support, with copies stored both digitally and in physical format within the Premises Information Box. All documentation is available for inspection during audits and can be accessed by authorised personnel to support regulatory compliance and continuous improvement in fire safety management.

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4.3 Revision History

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