

Supporting people to live well in their home and community.

**Southey
Court**

irwell
valley
homes

Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy





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Introduction and scope

Your safety is our top priority. We want you to feel safe in your home and know how to get in touch with us to raise any concerns or share ideas you may have.

Living in a block of apartments doesn't mean you are more at risk of experiencing a fire. But you do need to consider how a fire inside your home could affect you and others in your building.

This Resident Engagement Strategy is specific to Southey Court and considers all of the residents in the building and their individual needs.

The aims of this strategy are to make sure that you:

- Feel safe in your home.
- Can easily report any safety concerns in your home and the wider building.
- Know what to do in the event of an incident in the building.
- Understand our responsibilities as your landlord and your responsibilities as a tenant.
- Are aware of how you can be involved and influence building safety decisions.
- Know how Irwell Valley Homes responds to resident feedback.
- Have the information you need about your building.
- Know how to make a complaint if you feel you are not being listened to or have concerns.



As your landlord and the owner of the building, Irwell Valley Homes is responsible for managing fire safety at Southey Court and our other 4 high rise blocks. Southey Court contains 57 homes across 13 floors. The height of the building is 32.5 metres.

All properties in Southey Court are owned and managed by Irwell Valley Homes. The block houses a diverse range of residents, ranging from single people and couples to 2-bedroom flats with families with children. This changes over time, as do people's needs and circumstances.

- The average age of a resident in your block is 51
- 12.3% have a disability or impairment of some kind
- 2 languages are known to be spoken.

We ask you for this information annually as part of the customer census. If you have not updated your details with us recently or your circumstances have changed please email contact@irwellvalley.co.uk or call 0300 561 1111.

Southey Court has a 'Stay Put' fire evacuation policy. The building contains two lifts and one staircase at the rear of the building. Southey Court is situated close to Fitzgerald Court & Castleton Court which are managed in the same way.



Keeping you informed

Irwell Valley Homes will share information with you about building safety and any measures that are in place to ensure your safety in Southey Court.

Every year we will provide each resident an annual fire safety advice leaflet, which will also be shared with any new tenants at the start of their tenancy.

We will share information in a variety of ways, including:

- Letters, leaflets, and newsletters.
- Text messages and email.
- On our website and social media.
- On communal noticeboards.

If any residents have any additional needs and require communications in a certain format, we will always provide this if we are made aware.

There is lots of helpful fire safety information available on our website. This includes details about Fire Risk Assessments, our fire safety programme and safety information.

This can be viewed on our website [here](#) or if you need a printed copy please contact us.



Looking after your home and building

This document focuses on building and fire safety matters at Southey Court.

As part of the consultation to produce the final version of this document, residents raised some questions and concerns around home repairs and improvements and general maintenance and upkeep of the building.

To address these concerns, we have brought together some key information here. You can also visit our website www.irwellvalley.co.uk for further details about our services.

Repairs

- Irwell Valley Homes aims to complete routine repairs in 28 days, including fire safety repairs such as repairs to fire doors. Plastering, roofing and component upgrades can take up to 60 days.
- Emergency repairs - such as danger from open wiring, stopping the cause of a leak and no access to heating or hot water - will be dealt with within 24 hours.

Improvements

- We also carry out stock condition surveys on our high-rise buildings every 5 years to help us assess and prioritise what elements are needed in our home improvements programmes - for example, windows, kitchens and bathrooms.

Block maintenance

- As part of the grounds maintenance and cleaning contracts covering your building, the bin area at the rear exit is inspected each week, with any litter cleared to ensure there is a clear access/exist route. If you have any concerns about fly-tipping or littering in the bin areas, please report these to us.



Our legal responsibilities

As the building owner we have a legal duty to manage fire safety at Southey Court. These are the relevant aspects of Building Safety Law that we must adhere to and how we do this at Southey Court.

Fire Safety Act 2021

As part of requirements of the Fire Safety Act, our fire safety team carry out weekly visual fire safety checks in your building, raising any necessary repairs identified and keeping a record of all inspections. We also carry out:

- **Annual Fire Risk Assessments.** These are carried out by a certified consultant and reviewed by our internal fire safety team. The FRAs identify any hazards and precautions required in communal areas. Once an FRA has been done, our internal fire safety team will review the recommendations and complete any actions required.
- **Fire door inspections.** Fire doors are included in an inspection programme and are assessed annually, whilst communal fire doors are inspected quarterly. You can find information on our website about how to identify if your door needs a repair.

Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act 2022 was created to improve the design, construction, and management of higher risk buildings. Section 4 of the Building Safety Act 2022 sets out the requirements for a building safety resident engagement strategy. The Building Safety Act 2022 puts a legal requirement on customers that they must not:

- Do anything that creates a significant risk to your building's structural safety such as carrying out alterations to walls.
- Do anything that creates a significant risk of causing or spreading fire in your building, such as blocking communal areas which must always remain clear.
- Damage or remove any of your building's fire safety measures, such as smoke detectors, fire alarms, fire doors, and fire extinguishers.

You can also keep the building safe by:

- Checking smoke detectors in your home at least once a month.
- Providing access to resolve any identified issues and services to maintain properties.



Some of the features that help keep your building safe include:

Emergency lights:

- Emergency lighting is in place to ensure access ways are lit in the event of a loss of power in your building. The lights are tested monthly and are serviced annually.

A dry riser:

- A dry riser helps the fire service to get water up to your floor in an emergency. Dry risers are checked and maintained by Irwell Valley Homes on an annual basis.

Sprinkler system:

- Your flat contains a sprinkler system which runs a weekly test to check its pressure. The system is serviced annually. The system will activate in two stages, when a temperature reaches 57 degrees, the cover plate will remove itself and if the temperature increases further to 65 degrees the system will activate.

Secure information box:

- This is stored on the ground floor of your building and contains information to assist Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue should they need to attend in an emergency.

Fire doors:

- Fire doors are in place on the entrance to your property and in communal areas throughout the building. Each door provides 30 minutes of protection against fire and smoke whilst closed. The doors have an automatic closer installed which should not be tampered with. You can find information on our website on how to identify if your door needs a repair.

Compartmentation:

- Your building has been designed so that each flat is its own 'compartment'. This means that in an emergency, fire and smoke should stay contained within the flat.
- Compartmentation in communal areas is inspected annually.
- We work closely with anyone carrying out work in your building to ensure that they do not breach this compartmentation. If you are carrying out DIY works or plan to have any work carried out in your flat please let us know by completing our application to alter form. This is available on our website [here](#) or by calling **0300 561 1111**.

Vents:

- Vents are located in the stairwell in Southey Court. In the event of an emergency the vents would help in clearing smoke.

Evacuation

Southey Court has a Stay Put policy, developed in line with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service advice.

If there is a fire or smoke in your apartment, get out and stay out. Close all the doors behind you and only use the stairs.

Once outside, call the fire and rescue service by dialling 999 – don't assume someone else has called. Do not go back into the building until the fire service tells you it's safe to do so.

As your block has a 'Stay Put' fire evacuation policy, it may be safer for you to stay in your apartment if there is a fire in another part of the building. But if you feel unsafe at any time, then get out and call 999. If a member of the fire service tells you to leave the building, you should do so immediately.

When informed of a major incident we will implement Irwell Valley Homes' incident response plan. Irwell Valley Homes colleagues will be present to provide support and assistance.





Fire action

If fire breaks out in your flat:

Leave the room where the fire is straight away, then close the door.
Tell everyone in your flat and get them to leave.

Close the flat entrance door behind you.

Do not stay behind to put the fire out.

Wait outside, away from the building.

Call the fire service - dial 999 or 112

If you see or hear of a fire in another part of the building:

The building is designed to contain a fire in the flat where it starts.

This means it will usually be safe for you to stay in your own flat if the fire is elsewhere.

You must also leave immediately if smoke or heat affects your home, or you are told to leave by the fire service.

If you are in doubt - get out.

To call the fire service:

Dial 999 or 112

When the operator answers, give your telephone number and ask for fire.

When the fire service reply, give the address where the fire is.

Do not end the call until the fire service has repeated the address correctly.

How you can have your say

We will provide opportunities for you to have your say on decisions relating to building safety.

This may include:

- Checking if you have a preferred time for appointments about safety checks or works.
- Asking how we can reduce disruption when carrying out safety works.
- Getting your opinions on improving fire or building safety - for example, upgrading fire doors.
- Involving you in the design of any major upgrade works in the building.






how you can have your say



Join our Building Safety Forum.

Our Building Safety Forum is made up of customers who live in our high-rise buildings. They work with our building and fire safety teams to provide feedback and input on fire safety works, advice and communication. They meet once a quarter at different locations, including in Haughton Green. If you'd like to join the group, please email involve@irwellvalley.co.uk or call **0300 561 1111**.



Listening and acting on your feedback

Irwell Valley Homes will collect residents' opinions in a variety of ways, including:

- Through surveys by post or email.
- Via our website, email, social media, or customer portal.
- During meetings or visits to your building.

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If we are aware that a customer has any communication requirements these will be followed. For example, if a resident has additional needs and requires communications in a certain format, we will always provide this if we are made aware.

Different communication needs will always be considered when collecting opinions, with all communications being made available in different languages or in alternative formats such as large text, easy read, braille, or audio if requested.

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At the start of any resident consultation, we will let you know the timescales for the consultation. We will always aim to give you plenty of time to respond - however if a decision needs to be made urgently, we will let you know why.



We understand that not all decisions about the building will affect all customers, therefore, we will only consult with you if you will be directly affected by the proposed works or changes. For example, if the work only affects customers on the 10th floor, we will only consult with the customers on that floor.

It might not always be possible or appropriate to consult on changes to the way we manage or maintain the building, for example if there is a new legal requirement to carry out work. In this case we will always provide written notice in a timely manner.

We will also work with you to minimise the impact of such works – for example, by outlining set times of day that the work should be completed.

Irwell Valley Homes will follow the **Code of Practice for the remediation** of residential buildings when collecting, reviewing and acting on residents' opinions.

We will consider all responses received and may request further information to finalise a decision. We will aim to let you know the outcome of the consultation within 28 days. We will update all customers who have received the initial consultation unless you choose not to receive an update.

We will collect and store information in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Irwell Valley Homes' privacy statement which can be viewed on the Irwell Valley Homes website.

We will inform you of how your feedback has been used by providing a summary outlining what residents have told us and what decisions we've made following every consultation. For example:

You said	We did
80% of residents in your block said they would prefer to receive notice of an appointment in writing 10 days before an appointment.	Any time we arrange an appointment, you will be informed of this by letter with a ten-day notice period.
73% of residents in your block said they would like to be kept updated on building safety decisions by email.	We have created a regular newsletter updating on any decisions made and the progress of any works being carried out.

The above figures have been included as an example. In future updated strategies the table will feature figures from real recent customer consultations.



Measuring and reviewing participation

We will review how we collect feedback to encourage involvement in building safety decisions. We will do this by:

Sharing how many responses received.

- We will also keep a record of responses for each consultation.

Using surveys and focus groups.

- We will send out surveys to all residents, gain feedback from our Building Safety Panel (*which is open to all residents to join*) and host focus groups when necessary to gain resident feedback.

Setting up meetings and visits.

- Irwell Valley Homes may set up meetings, drop-in sessions, or complete visits to the block as part of any necessary consultation. These will provide an opportunity to share information about major works or developments and to consult with residents about them.





measuring and reviewing participation

Building safety complaints

You have the right to raise a complaint if you feel a report or work carried out has not been handled satisfactorily.

Handling complaints

- Any building safety complaints should be reported to us to be allocated appropriately and resolved within 10 days.
- Following a complaint, Irwell Valley Homes will provide a written response including details of the investigation which has taken place, the outcomes and any actions.

Escalating a complaint

- If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint, you have the right to escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator.

The Building Safety Regulator in England is part of Health and Safety Executive and was established under The Building Safety Act 2022 to:

- regulate high rise buildings
- raise safety standards of all buildings.
- help professionals in design, construction, and building control, to improve their competence.

Learning from complaints

- Irwell Valley Homes will publish details of complaint themes and lessons learnt from complaints on our website.







Roles and responsibilities

Our team is committed to keeping your home safe. There are several people who play a role in this. The table below sets out who does what, and how you can contact them.

Team/Role	Responsibility
Building Safety Lead	Ensures necessary regulatory checks are completed such as Fire Risk Assessments in your building and completing any actions identified through inspections.
Head of Asset Management	Leads on all aspects of delivering and implementing Irwell Valley Homes's Asset Management Strategy to ensure our homes are safe, desirable and affordable, including all property related compliance and facilities management.
Customer Engagement Officer	Provides opportunities for customers to be involved in decision making. Provides feedback on how your views have been considered. Holds quarterly Building Safety Forum meetings which you are welcome to attend.
Lead Neighbourhood Officer	Supports the team with tenancy and building management, including tackling concerns such as items blocking access ways and supporting colleagues with the maintenance of the area.
Neighbourhood Officer	Provides support with tenancy and building management, including tackling concerns such as items blocking access ways and supporting colleagues with the maintenance of the area.
Head of Customers and Communities	Overall responsibility for tenancy management of the building. Ensures feedback and learning is embedded to enhance services.
Executive Director, Customers and Communities	Overall responsibility for tenancy management, engagement and customer experience for residents living in the block. Ensuring all customer services are delivered to the correct standard.
Executive Director, Homes	Overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of an Asset Management Strategy, including day to day repairs, to ensure our homes are safe, desirable, affordable and compliant with regulation.
Resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live safely in your home and don't do anything that may put other residents at risk for example, making alterations without permission.• Know what to do in the event of a fire in your property or another part of the building.• Provide access to resolve any identified issues and service and maintain properties.• Check batteries in your smoke alarms at least once a month.• Keep stairwells and exits clear.• Allow access to your home to carry out servicing, maintenance or safety checks. <p>Contact us if your circumstances change and you can't get out on your own in the event of a fire. Report any repairs and safety concerns to us. You can report concerns by contacting 0300 561 1111 or by emailing contact@irwellvalley.co.uk.</p>



Review and monitoring

Irwell Valley Homes will review this strategy:

- Every two years.
- After every consultation period held on the strategy.
- After a mandatory occurrence report. See below for more information about what this means. This is the process of reporting any fire safety or structural concerns to the Building Safety Regulator which meets the level of risk set out by the Regulator.
- After the completion of any significant safety works or alterations to the building.

We will consider all opinions received from residents about the strategy and will inform you of any changes or any reasons why a change is not made if a request is not considered appropriate.



How can we help?

If you are unhappy with this strategy or how we are managing fire safety in your building, you can let us know by contacting **contact@irwellvalley.co.uk** or **0300 561 1111**.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint, you can escalate the complaint to the Building Safety Regulator via their website **www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-building-safety-regulator** or call **0300 790 6787**.



What is a Mandatory Occurrence Report?

This is the name given to the process of raising concerns with the Building Safety Regulator that have resulted or could result in serious harm to a significant number of people – for example concerns about the structure of a building, or fire safety concerns.

Occurrences include both incidents that have happened, and circumstances which create a risk of an incident happening in the future.

Irwell Valley Homes must make the report, even if the concern is remedied immediately.

Examples of what might result in a report being required are:

- Defective building work.
- Fire safety issues likely to result in the spread of fire.
- The use of non-compliant products in the construction of the building.
- Inappropriate or incorrect installation of construction products.
- Preventative facilities in the building not working properly, such as a fault in the sprinkler system.

Our Building Safety Team attend the building at least once a week to inspect and check for any issues. However, if you have any concerns relating to the structure of the building, or an increased risk of the spread of fire, please contact Irwell Valley Homes immediately on **0300 561 1111** or via the live chat function on our website.


Please include full details of your concern and the exact location. We ask that you use these contact methods to ensure we are aware of your concern in the shortest possible timeframe.

Once a report is received, our Building Safety Team will complete an investigation within 24 hours. The team will complete and log any necessary reports with the Building Safety Regulator and provide an updated outcome to the resident(s) who logged the concern. As part of the initial investigation, our team may wish to contact you for further information. You can request an update on your concern by contacting us through the methods above or by emailing **contact@irwellvalley.co.uk**.



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 0300 561 1111

 www.irwellvalley.co.uk

 contact@irwellvalley.co.uk

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