Fire Safety Management of Communal Areas at The Watchmakers 22 Lord Street, Chapelfields, Coventry CV5 8DA.

Guidance Note

Shopstuff Ltd takes its responsibility with regard to fire safety for residents very seriously. Following new legislation in 2006, BVT minimises the risk of fire as much as possible by conducting Fire Risk Assessments. These cover communal areas in blocks of flats but not inside each resident’s flat.

These risk assessments identify key actions to reduce risk to residents in each individual block, however in relation to the communal areas – halls, stairs, stairwells and landings, these guidance notes aim to minimise the risk of fire whilst still allowing residents to personalise the area immediately outside their homes.

In striking the balance between fire safety and personalisation of communal areas. The result is a common sense approach which we hope residents feel is fair.

o Door mats will be acceptable so long as they are;

o specifically intended to be a door mat,

o with a non-slip backing material,

o In good condition and free from curling edges,

o Placed directly in front of the tenants door,

o Not oversized (max width of door x 18in),

o Not located at the top of stairs, (tripping hazard)

o Rugs, runners and carpet tiles will **NOT** be acceptable.

o Residents‟ furniture will **NOT** be acceptable under any circumstances, including chairs, tables, cupboards, screens etc.

 o A small plant in a ceramic pot is permitted in the direct vicinity of the tenant’s front door, as long as no obstruction is caused to passers by. The following examples would **NOT** be acceptable; plastic flowers and plants as these are combustible, large plants such as „cheese‟ plants, yucca plants, plastic containers, vegetable racks or other storage containers, tenant’s shoes, trainers etc.

 o Window cills – again, a small plant in a ceramic pot is permitted unless to do so would obstruct a doorway or fail to provide clear passage through a hallway.

o Pictures and other wall ornaments will **NOT** be allowable unless provided or approved by Shopstuff Limited. External letter boxes fixed to the wall are permissible if the tenant’s front door is not fitted with a letter box or there is a specific need for the letter box to be located in this position.

 o Net Curtains and other window shades, blinds or curtains not provided by Shopstuff Limited will **NOT** be acceptable in communal areas.

o Bicycles, prams, pushchairs and similar items will **NOT** normally be permitted to be stored or located within the internal communal parts of the scheme unless there is a purpose built cupboard or an area capable of storage without causing obstruction.

o Recycling receptacles, rubbish bins, etc are **NOT** permitted to be stored or located within the internal communal parts of the scheme unless this is within a purpose built area.

 o Any other object or item that obstructs or creates trip hazards in any walkway, stair or corridor is **NOT** acceptable.

 o Any other object or item that presents a significant fire hazard or additional fire loading is **NOT** acceptable.

Where items have been identified which cause a hazard to people using or living within the block then Shopstuff Limited will take action to remove these items.

Tenancy agreements both Assured and Secure from 2007 put responsibility onto tenants:

“To keep communal staircases and passageways clean and tidy and not to impede or obstruct any common parts”, also:

“You are not permitted to store personal items such as (but not limited to) bicycles, pushchairs, tables, chairs in the communal areas”.

These tenants therefore have a responsibility to keep their areas clear.

Any inspections, for whatever reason, which reveal the guidance, has been contravened, must result in the appropriate enforcement action being taken.

Whilst notice can be served under the terms of the tenancy agreement, this may not always be appropriate. If a customer has failed to remove items as requested, we may choose to arrange removal and recharge the customer.

During a Fire Risk Assessment, any items found in the communal areas will be reported and catalogued. It will be the responsibility of the Shopstuff Limited to either acknowledge the known risks (in compliance with these guidance notes), or to take appropriate action to remove the risk.