

# **Title Fire Safety Policy**

**Applicable Company: Calico Homes**

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**Signed Off By: Calico Homes Board**

**Review Cycle: Bi-Annually**

**Revision Date: 04/02/2025**

**Next Review Date: 03/02/2027**

**Policy Checklist Completed? Yes**



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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 As a landlord, Calico Homes (Calico) is responsible for carrying out fire risk assessments, and taking action to identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with fire within the common areas of buildings we own and manage.
- 1.2 We have a duty to take general fire precaution measures to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of the people on our premises and in the immediate vicinity.
- 1.3 The key objective of this policy is to ensure that our Board, Executive Leadership Team (ELT), employees, partners and customers are clear on our legal and regulatory fire safety obligations. This policy provides the framework our colleagues and partners will operate within to meet these obligations.

- 1.4 This policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst colleagues and contractors (as detailed within our corporate Health and Safety Policy). It will be saved on our shared drive and distributed to all relevant colleagues.

## 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy is relevant to all our employees, customers, contractors, stakeholders and other persons who may work on, occupy, visit, or use our premises, or who may be affected by our activities or services.
- 2.2 The policy should be used by all to ensure they understand the obligations placed upon Calico to maintain a safe environment for customers and employees, within the home of each customer, and within all common areas of buildings and other properties we own and manage. Adherence to this policy is mandatory.

## 3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Calico is designated as the Responsible Person under the legislation because we own and manage properties where customers and leaseholders reside.
- 3.2 The Board has overall governance responsibility for ensuring this policy is fully implemented to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulatory standards. As such, the Board will formally approve this policy and review it bi-annually (or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulation).
- 3.3 For assurance that this policy is operating effectively in practice, the Board will receive regular updates on its implementation, fire safety performance and non-compliance.
- 3.4 EMT will receive monthly performance reports in respect of fire safety and ensure compliance is being achieved. They will also be notified of any non-compliance issue identified.
- 3.5 The Managing Director has strategic responsibility for the management of fire safety and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained. They will oversee the implementation of this policy.
- 3.6 The Director of Maintenance and Compliance has operational responsibility for the management of fire safety and will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of these programmes.

- 3.7 The health and safety team will support the compliance team with the delivery of fire strategy across Calico homes.
- 3.8 Housing teams will assist when gaining access to properties is challenging. Once access is granted, employees should inspect for fire hazards and report any fire risks to the compliance team right away if they are noticed or suspected.

#### 4.0 Legislation, Guidance and regulator standards

**Legislation** - The principal legislation applicable to this policy is as follows:

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** The Order places the responsibility on individuals within an organisation to carry out risk assessments to identify, manage and reduce the risk of fire.
  - **The Fire Safety Act 2021** clarifies the scope of the RRFSO to make clear it applies to the structure, external walls (including cladding and balconies) and individual flat entrance doors between domestic premises and the common parts of a multi-occupied residential building.
  - **The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022** lays under article 24 of the RRFSO. Regulations made under article 24 can impose requirements on responsible persons or others, including building owners and building managers, in relation to mitigating the risk to residents for specific premises.
- 4.1 **The Building Safety Act 2022** strengthens regulations and accountability for building safety, particularly for high-rise buildings, ensuring better fire safety, resident involvement, and the remediation of unsafe structures.
- This policy also operates within the context of additional legislation and government policy statements/direction (see Appendix 1).
- 4.2 **Guidance** – The principal guidance documents applicable to this policy are:

- Housing - Fire Safety: Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing. Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS), August 2008.
- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats. Hosted by the Home Office and to be read alongside the National Fire Chiefs Council's guidance on simultaneous evacuation, 2011.  
[Note: this guidance should be viewed as no longer comprehensive; the Home Office is currently working on a revised version but in the interim, it is continued to be made available as it contains relevant and useful information for purpose-built blocks of flats].
- Fire Safety in Specialised Housing. National Fire Chiefs Council, May 2017. This guidance covers sheltered schemes, supported schemes and extra care schemes.
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance: Housing Act 2004 guidance about inspections and assessment of hazards given under Section 9. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, February 2006.
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System Operating Guidance: Addendum for the profile for the hazard of fire and in relation to cladding systems on high rise residential buildings. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, November 2018.
- Simultaneous Evacuation Guidance: Guidance to support a temporary change to a simultaneous evacuation strategy in purpose-built blocks of flats. National Fire Chiefs Council, October 2020.

4.3 **Regulatory standards** – We must ensure we comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England; the safety & quality standard is the primary one applicable to this policy.

4.4 **Sanctions** – Failure to discharge our responsibilities and obligations properly could lead to sanctions, including: prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (the HSE) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; prosecution under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007; prosecution by the Fire and Rescue Service under the Fire Safety Order; and via a regulatory notice judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing.

## 5.0 Obligations

## 5.1 **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the FSO)**

The Responsible Person (Calico) must:

- Undertake a fire risk assessment (FRA) for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions and other measures needed to comply with the FSO. Although under the FSO this requirement only applies to common parts of premises, in practice the responsible person will need to consider the entire premises, including units of residential accommodation.
- Consider who may be especially at risk.
- Implement all necessary general fire precautions and any other necessary measures identified by an FRA to remove or reduce any risks.
- As Calico homes lease a number of properties the duty of the "Responsible Person" is split between us (the leaseholder) and the property provider, depending on the specific areas under control. We are responsible for fire safety measures within the leased premises, ensuring compliance with fire risk assessments, fire detection systems, and emergency planning. The property provider is responsible for maintaining fire safety systems in shared or common areas. Clear communication and coordination with the provider are crucial to ensure all fire safety responsibilities are met across both parties.
- Implement a suitable system of maintenance and appoint competent persons to carry out any procedures that have been adopted.
- Professional fire risk assessments will be undertaken on relevant buildings on an annual basis.

## 5.2 **Fire Safety Act 2021**

- The Fire Safety Act 2021 arose out of the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire and relates to fire safety in buildings in England and Wales with two or more domestic residences, making changes to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the "Fire Safety Order").
- The act includes the following provisions: Those responsible for the fire safety of a building will be required to share information about its external walls with the local fire and rescue service.
- Building owners or managers will have to inspect flat entrance doors annually and lifts monthly, notifying the local fire and rescue service if there are any faults with the lifts.
- Residents of buildings with two or more flats will need to have access to evacuation and fire safety instructions provided by the building owner or manager.

### 5.3 **Building Safety Act 2022**

The Building Safety Bill received Royal Assent in April 2022 to become an Act of Parliament. The Act applies to “high risk buildings” that are at least 18 metres in height or have at least seven storeys and have at least two residential units. The Act also refers to “relevant buildings” that are at least 11 metres in height or have at least 5 storeys and have at least two dwellings. Calico homes do not currently have any “high risk” buildings that fall in scope of the Act, however, have one “relevant building” that falls within the scope of 11 metres. The buildings height information is stored against individual asset data on Active H under the two categories:

- Is your organisation the Responsible Entity for any buildings with a height of between 11 metres and 18 metres OR which have 5 or 6 storeys but are below 18 metres in height that contain at least one unit of dwelling stock?
- Is your organisation the Responsible Entity for any buildings with a height of 18 metres or more OR which have 7 or more storeys that contain at least one unit of dwelling stock?

### 5.4 **The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022**

The Fire Safety Regulations made it a legal requirement from 23 January 2023 for responsible persons for all multi-occupied residential buildings in England with storeys over 11 metres in height to:

- undertake quarterly checks of all fire doors (including self-closing devices) in the common parts.
- undertake – on a best endeavour basis – annual checks of all flat entrance doors (including self-closing devices) that lead onto a building’s common parts.

## 6.0 **Statement of Intent**

- 6.1 We acknowledge and accept our responsibilities under the FSO (as amended by the Fire Safety Act 2021) as outlined in Section 5.

- 6.2 Under the Building Safety Act, we will consider/adopt key principles for our occupied communal buildings where appropriate (for example, development of a Customer Engagement Strategy)
- 6.3 Each property requiring an FRA will have one that has been carried out by a competent fire risk assessor and is compliant with the British Standards Institution's PAS 79 specifications for residential and non-residential buildings.
- 6.4 All FRAs will be reviewed no later than the review date set within the most recent FRA for that building.
- 6.5 FRAs will be reviewed in the event of:
- a fire, fire safety incident or near miss.
  - change in building use.
  - change in working practices that may affect fire safety.
  - following refurbishment works or building layout amendment.
  - change in applicable legislation; or
  - if required following an independent fire safety audit.
- 6.6 We will operate robust processes to implement all general fire precaution measures identified by FRAs.
- 6.7 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) will be carried out by a competent person, reviewed annually, and made available to the Fire and Rescue Service in the event of an evacuation, as follows:
- for any Customer and/or employee who has a disability within any building where we provide care services and are the employer (i.e. sheltered or supported housing schemes); and
  - for any customer within a building where we have a responsibility for carrying out an FRA, where we have been notified that they are storing oxygen in their home for medical use.
- 6.8 We are committed to working with the relevant Fire and Rescue Services in our operational areas to create safer places to live and work. This joint working may include sharing information, having FRAs reviewed, and colleague training. If required, we may also refer some customers to LFRS to receive a free home fire safety check.
- 6.9 Fire evacuation strategies will be determined for each individual building, in accordance with the recommendations of the competent fire risk assessor and any guidance for Calico homes from LFRS.
- 6.10 If we are made aware that a customer has an issue with mobility or a cognitive impairment, a person-centred fire risk assessment (PCFRA) will be completed.
- 6.11 We will operate robust processes to gain access to properties where customer vulnerability issues are known or identified (including hoarding), whilst ensuring we safeguard the wellbeing of the customer.

- 6.12 We will operate robust processes following our no access procedure to gain access should any customer or leaseholder refuse access to carry out essential fire safety inspection and remediation works.
- 6.13 We will test (and replace as required) hard-wired/battery smoke and carbon monoxide alarms as part of the annual gas safety check visit (or at void stage).
- 6.14 We will operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including ensuring contracts/service level agreements are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings, and ensuring that contractors' employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis.
- 6.15 We will operate a robust process to manage immediately dangerous situations identified during fire safety programmes.
- 6.16 We will adopt a sterile environment in the common areas of communal blocks, requiring customers to remove any materials from corridors and fire escape routes. We will adopt a managed approach in Independent Living Schemes, which means some items will be permitted in common areas.
- 6.17 We will not permit storage or charging of mobility scooters, E-bikes and/or Electric scooters within common sterile areas forming a building's escape route/s. We will only permit charging and/or storage of Mobility scooters, E-bikes and/or Electric scooters in a designated controlled areas of the building designed for such purpose.
- 6.18 When letting properties, we will consider the suitability of the accommodation for the prospective customer in respect of fire safety.
- 6.19 We will establish and maintain a risk assessment for fire safety management, setting out our key fire safety risks and appropriate mitigations.
- 6.20 To comply with the requirements of the Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015 (CDM) a Construction Phase Plan will be in place for all repairs work to void and tenanted properties (at the start of the contract and reviewed annually thereafter), component replacement and refurbishment works.
- 6.21 We will operate robust processes to record and action any actual fires and fire safety related 'near misses. A 'near miss' is an unplanned event which does not result in an injury but had the potential to do so.
- 6.22 We will ensure there is a robust process in place to investigate and manage all RIDDOR notifications made to the HSE in relation to fire safety and will take action to address any issues identified and lessons we have learned to prevent a similar incident occurring again.

## 7.0 Programs

- 7.1 **FRAs** - We will ensure all our communal blocks and other non-domestic properties that we own or manage have a fire risk assessment where we have the legal obligation to do so.
- 7.2 Thereafter, we will maintain a programme of FRA reviews, in a timescale appropriate to the premises and occupation fire risk level.
- 7.3 All FRAs will be Type 3 surveys, apart from commercial premises which will have Type 1 surveys. Type 2 and Type 4 surveys will only be commissioned where it is deemed appropriate for a particular property.
- 7.4 We will ensure that a pre-occupation FRA is carried out on all new build schemes or new acquisitions where we have an obligation to do so, followed by a post-occupation FRA, a maximum of three months after the first tenant moves in.
- 7.5 **Properties managed by others** – We will complete FRAs where our properties are managed by a third party.
- 7.6 **Fire door audits** - We will undertake regular audits of all communal fire doors and annual audits to a 25 per cent sample of flat entrance doors on properties under 11 metres (May need to Increase sample size if major none conformities are discovered during the initial sample). On properties over 11 metres quarterly fire door inspections will be carried out on common areas and annual inspection on flat doors.
- 7.7 **Servicing** - We will carry out a programme of servicing, maintenance and testing, in accordance with all relevant British Standards and manufacturer's recommendations, to all fire detection, prevention and firefighting systems and equipment within buildings we own and manage. We have a programme in place for servicing fire alarm and smoke detection systems.
- 7.8 **Regular inspections** – We will carry out a programme of block inspections to audit that all required FRA management actions have been completed.

## 8.0 Follow Up Work

- 8.1 We will ensure robust processes are in place to implement all general fire precaution measures identified by FRAs, in accordance with the following priorities and timescales:
  - Immediate/intolerable risk – within 24 hours.
  - High risk – within one month.

- Medium risk – within three months.
  - Low risk – within six months or delivered as part of a planned programme within 12 months.
- 8.2 We will ensure there is a robust process in place to manage follow-up works arising from fire door audits, and servicing and maintenance checks to fire systems and equipment.

## 9.0 Data and Records

- 9.1 We will maintain a core asset register of all properties we own or manage, setting out which properties require an FRA. We will also set out which properties require fire safety servicing and maintenance regimes (for example, fire alarms and emergency lighting).
- 9.2 We will operate a robust process to manage all changes to stock, including property acquisitions and disposals, to ensure that properties are not omitted from fire safety programmes and the programme remains up to date.
- 9.3 We will hold fire safety inspection dates, FRA reports, FRA actions, and fire safety servicing records against all properties on each programme. These will be held in RiskBase, Active H and Documotive and a monthly report will be produced on Power bi.
- 9.4 We will keep fire safety logbooks electronically (or securely on site where practical), for all properties on the FRA programme.
- 9.5 We will keep all records and data for a minimum of 5 years and will have robust processes and controls in place to maintain appropriate levels of security for all fire safety related data.
- 9.6 The Compliance Team monitors progress on the completion of FRA actions. A monthly update is circulated by the compliance manager including the number of FRA actions that have gone past their policy timescale for completion. This includes Specific reporting concentrating on high, medium and low actions collating information from both Power BI and risk base.
- 9.7 The Compliance Manager will conduct a quarterly reconciliation between the Active H system and risk base to ensure that the fire risk assessment dates are accurately reflected in both systems, thereby maintaining data integrity and consistency.

## 10.0 Customer Engagement

- 10.1 We consider good communication essential in the effective delivery of fire safety programs, therefore we will establish a customer engagement strategy and communication programme. This will support customers in their understanding of fire safety, advise them of how they can keep themselves and other customers safe, and encourage them to report any fire safety concerns.
- 10.2 . Customers will be informed of the appropriate course of action—whether there is a stay put or evacuation strategy for their building. A "stay put" strategy means customers should remain inside their homes Calico homes will also refer to this a 'Stay Put' policy. This means that if there is a fire in your flat you should leave the flat and the building. If there is a fire somewhere else in the building, you can remain in your flat and do not need to leave the building unless safe to do so. Evacuation strategy encourages customers to take immediate steps to protect themselves, such as moving to a safe area or avoiding potential hazards, until further instructions are issued. If evacuation is necessary, customers should calmly and quickly exit the building using designated emergency exits and gather at the pre-determined assembly point. We also aim to successfully engage with vulnerable and hard to reach customers. We will share information clearly and transparently and will ensure that information is available to customers via regular publications and information on our website.
- 10.3 Within 12 months of the approval of this policy, we will provide customers with online access to a customer friendly version of the FRA for their property. A full version of the FRA will also be made available upon request.

## 11.0 Equality and Diversity

This policy ensures that all customers are treated equally, with no discrimination or victimization based on any protected characteristic as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Calico Homes has considered its public sector equality duties under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which require the following:

- **Eliminating Discrimination:** Taking steps to prevent any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization.
- **Advancing Equality of Opportunity:** Ensuring equal opportunities for individuals with protected characteristics compared to those without.
- **Fostering Good Relations:** Promoting positive interactions and mutual understanding between individuals with different protected characteristics.
- **Ensuring Accessibility:** Calico Homes is committed to providing accessible formats of information, such as Braille, large print, and digital formats for those with visual impairments. We also ensure

web accessibility for individuals with disabilities and offer translator services to support effective communication for all customers.

Additionally, the policy considers the diversity of customers in terms of their access to and the delivery of services, ensuring fair and inclusive treatment for all.

## 12.0 Competent

- 12.1 The Director of compliance and Maintenance and the Compliance project Manager will hold the NEBOSH National Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management (or equivalent), or Level 4 VRQ Diploma in Asset and Building Management. If they do not have this already, they will obtain it within 12 months of the approval of this policy.
- 12.2 Only suitably competent contractors, fire risk assessors and fire engineers will undertake professional FRAs or works to fire safety equipment, systems and installations.
- 12.3 These must be certified by:
  - British approvals for fire equipment (BAFE)
  - The Fire Industry association (FIA)
  - Or an Institute of the Fire safety Managers member (IFSM), and on a UKAS accredited certification scheme that meets the competency criteria established by the Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council.
- 12.4 Only suitably competent fire safety consultants and contractors will provide third-party technical quality assurance checks.
- 12.5 We will check that our contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations upon procurement and then on an annual basis thereafter. We will document these checks and each contractor's certification appropriately.

## 13.0 Training

- 13.1 We will deliver training on this policy and the procedures that support it, including team briefings; basic fire safety awareness training; and on the job training for those delivering the programme of FRAs and other fire safety programmes, planned maintenance and repairs works as part of their daily job. All training undertaken by colleagues will be formally recorded.

## 14.0 Performance Reporting

14.1 We will report robust key performance indicator (KPI) measures for fire safety. These will be provided to EMT monthly and to the Board on a quarterly basis. As a minimum, we will report:

### **Data – the total number of:**

- properties – communal blocks and other properties.
- properties on the FRA programme.
- properties not on the FRA programme.
- properties with a valid and in date FRA.
- properties without a valid and in date FRA.
- properties due a new FRA within the next 90 days; and
- completed, in-time and overdue follow-up works/actions arising from the programme (split by priority).

### **Narrative – an explanation of the:**

- current position.
- corrective action required.
- anticipated impact of corrective action; and
- progress with completion of follow-up works.

### **In addition:**

- Compliance with the fire safety equipment, systems and installations servicing and maintenance programme.
- The number of RIDDOR notifications to the HSE with regards to fire safety.
- Details of any enforcement notices from the Fire and Rescue Service or other enforcement bodies.
- Recording and reporting on property fires to identify trends and target awareness campaigns.

## 15.0 Quality Assurance

15.1 We will ensure there is a programme of internal quality assurance audits of FRAs (field and desktop), on a ten per cent sample basis.

15.2 We will carry out a programme of regular property inspections to all properties with an FRA to audit that all required management actions have been completed.

15.3 We will carry out an independent audit of fire safety at least once every two years, to specifically test for compliance with legal and regulatory obligations and to identify any non-compliance issues for correction.

## 16.0 Significant none-compliance and escalation

- 16.1 Our definition of significant non-compliance is any incident which has the potential to result in a potential breach of legislation or regulatory standard, or which causes a risk to health or safety. All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred, or of a Calico employee becoming aware of it.
- 16.2 Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Asset Manager in the first instance, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Managing Director, Head of Business Assurance and Head of Operations and report details of the same to EMT.
- 16.3 In cases of serious non-compliance, EMT and Board will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive.

## 17.0 Glossary

- 17.1 This glossary defines key terms used throughout this policy:
- **BAFE:** Is the independent register of quality fire safety service providers, who are certified to ensure quality and competence to help meet fire safety obligations.
  - **FRA:** A fire risk assessment is an assessment involving the systematic evaluation of the factors that determine the hazard from fire, the likelihood that there will be a fire and the consequences if one were to occur.
  - **FRA survey:** The FSO states that an FRA is required, however, it does not prescribe how intrusive or destructive this should be. There are four types of FRA:
    - Type 1 – common parts only (non-destructive), basic level to satisfy the FSO.
    - Type 2 – common parts only (destructive), element of destruction on sample basis.
    - Type 3 – common parts and flats (non-destructive), considers means of escape and fire detection within at least a sample of flats.
    - Type 4 – common parts and flats (destructive).
  - **IFSM:** The Institute of Fire Safety Managers.
  - **PAS79:** A publicly available specification published by the British Standards Institution which focuses on making sure that all the

required information that pertains to both an FRA and its findings are recorded.

- **PEEP:** A personal emergency evacuation plan is a bespoke escape plan for individuals who may not be able to reach an ultimate place of safety unaided or within a satisfactory period of time in the event of any emergency.
- **UKAS:** The National Accreditation Body for the United Kingdom, appointed by government to assess and accredit organisations that provide services including certification, testing, inspection and calibration.

## Appendix 1 – Additional legislation and policy direction

**Legislation** - This policy also operates within the context of the following legislation:

- The Defective Premises Act 1972
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing Act 2004
- Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions) (England) Regulations 2006
- Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Occupiers' Liability Act 1984
- Building Regulations 2010: Approved Document B Fire Safety
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985

**Policy direction** – The following documents set out clear direction for landlords in respect of fire safety, and whilst not statutory guidance or approved legislation, there are certain recommendations or proposals which are applicable to this policy:

- Personal Emergency Evacuation General Residential Premises, Version 1, Spring 2022. Fire Sector Federation.
- Building a Safer Future - Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Final Report, May 2018.
- Building a Safer Future - Proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system: A consultation, June 2019.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005: Call for Evidence, July 2019 and summary of responses, March 2020.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry: phase 1 report. Volume 1 – 4, October 2019.

