

Building Safety Resident Panel meeting

Minutes

Date	Thursday, 22 January 2026
Time	10.30 am – 11.30 am
Location	Magna Carta Room Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, KT15 2AH

1. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference document was circulated to members prior to the meeting..

Stephan Scheiner, Compliance Manager, introduced the proposed Terms of Reference, outlining its purpose, structure, and the role of the Resident Panel.

Two questions were raised:

- **Minimum member age:** It was confirmed the Panel is open to all residents aged 16 and over.
- **Chair and Vice-Chair roles:** Discussion on the process for electing or appointing these positions was held.

The Terms of Reference were agreed by members and have been signed by the Panel members.

2. Building Safety Action Plan

The document had been ad been circulated before the meeting.

Stephan explained the Action Plan was originally prepared alongside the Building Safety Policy and its Engagement Strategy when presented to the Housing Committee. Several actions within the plan have now been completed.

The updated version will be circulated to Panel members for review, and residents were invited to send feedback to Andrea. The Plan remains a live document and will continue to be refined with resident input.

3. Residential Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

Stephan provided an update on the new Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) Regulations 2025, which will come into force on 6 April 2026 in England.

Under these Regulations:

- Residents of high-rise buildings such as Surrey Towers who may have difficulty evacuating in an emergency must be identified.
- A person-centred fire risk assessment will be offered to consenting residents to understand individual needs and to agree an appropriate evacuation approach.
- An Emergency Evacuation Statement will be produced with the resident, outlining agreed actions in the event of a fire.
- With resident consent, information about their evacuation needs may be shared with the local Fire and Rescue Service to support operational response planning.

Residents are currently being contacted to arrange assessments.

A Panel member suggested preparing forms with basic details pre-filled to reduce the time required for each assessment.

Currently, assessments will be carried out by staff from the Compliance Team. Once a new Area Housing Manager has been appointed, responsibility for this process will be transferred to them. All assessments will be reviewed annually..

4. Ongoing Issues with the Passenger Lifts at Surrey Towers

Stephan provided an update on issues affecting the building's lifts and reiterated that ensuring mobility for residents with disabilities is a Council priority.

The building has two lifts to provide resilience should one be unavailable. However, this redundancy has not been achieved recently, and frequent faults have occurred, which the Council recognised as unacceptable.

An urgent meeting was held with Amalgamated Lifts (the installation contractor), Council officers, and the project's independent consultant. A senior technician from Amalgamated Lifts investigated the recent problems and identified a defective input/output (I/O) board as the primary cause of faults on Lift 2. A new board was installed on 15 January 2026, and it is hoped this will reduce breakdowns. Monitoring continues.

Amalgamated Lifts have committed their most senior technician to provide on-site support at Surrey Towers for prompt advice and assistance if further issues arise.

Residents will continue to be informed as soon as possible about any lift-related problems or planned works.

It was also confirmed that contractors are being granted access to restricted areas as required for essential maintenance.

It was noted that the alarm in one of the lifts did not function when a resident became trapped. Stephan and Robert will carry out tests on both lifts and report back to the Panel.

5. Fire Risk Assessment

The most recent Fire Risk Assessment was completed in November 2025. Andrea will arrange for printed copies to be sent to members as some were unable to open the electronic file.

The assessment report is extensive (52 pages), and an extract summarising key findings will be circulated in an Excel format.

The assessment is carried out annually. Previously it was suggested that some Panel members or residents participate in the inspection; arrangements will be made with the contractor to support this involvement.

The assessment did not identify any high-risk issues requiring immediate action. However, several medium- and low-risk issues were highlighted and are being addressed.

One recurring issue identified is the presence of items left in communal areas. Caretakers inspect these areas each morning recording items left out to help identify repeat non-compliance.

A new Communal Area Policy is being prepared for approval by the Housing Committee. Once this policy is approved, residents will receive a copy.

6. Any Other Business – Issues Raised by Residents

The Council will shortly be recruiting a new Area Manager to cover Surrey Towers and the Garfield Estate, who will then take responsibility for addressing the issues relating to communal cupboards.