

Fire Risk Assessments – Specialised Housing



About GreenSquareAccord

GreenSquare Group and Accord Housing merged in April 2021 to become GreenSquareAccord

We have:

25,000 homes
150 + care and support schemes
54,000 housing customers
4,000 colleagues
3,000,000 hours of care delivered every year



Our buildings range is large and includes purpose-built care facilities, converted existing buildings providing residential or supported living care, listed buildings, purpose-built blocks of flats and ranges of houses

We have a geographical reach from Newcastle to Salisbury, an in-house design, construction and sale team, with an off-site manufacturing facility producing timber framed homes

Specialised housing at GreenSquareAccord

- We currently have:-
- 118 supported living premises
- 76+ sheltered housing schemes
- 29 Hostel Accommodations
- 9 Extra Care facilities
- We work with a number of agencies delivering care and support in our buildings, including District Councils, County Councils and various Care providers

Fire Risk Assessment - background

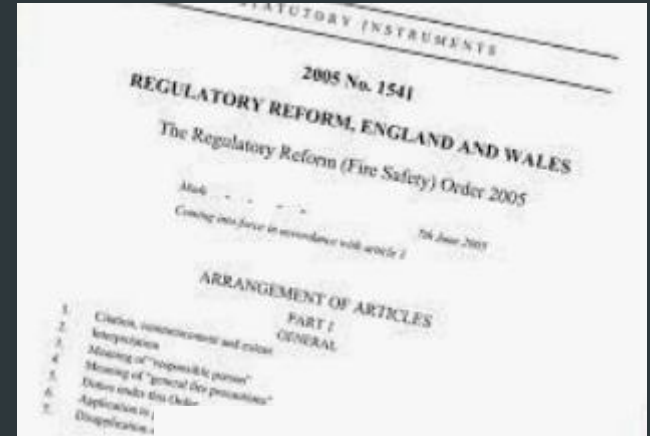
- At merge point it became clear that the two different legacy organisations had a differing approach to fire risk assessment and process, which needed aligning
- One of the legacy organisations had an in-house team delivering their FRAs, always having done so, and one used an external provider, that are third party certificated assessments, UKAS accredited

Our next step

- We decided to fire risk assess the whole legacy Organisations applicable buildings using an external provider to provide a consistent approach
- Care and Support premises were completed first
- The fire risk assessments are undertaken by **competent**, registered fire risk assessors and the assessments are held in a cloud risk-based management system
- This enabled us to roll this process out quickly and effectively
- Each fire risk action is also held individually within the cloud-based system and is given a timeframe for completion
- This allows us to ensure actions are managed effectively by reaching the right person or contractor to ensure it is actioned sufficiently and hold evidence of this
- Each FRA is individually certificated, following PAS 79 methodology, providing GSA with reassurance that it is suitable and sufficient * Awaiting changes to PAS 79-2*

Why this was the right approach

- The significant findings from the new FRAs indicate a number of improvements GSA has been able to make quickly and need to make in the near future
- Understand our overall risk
- Allowed GSA to adopt best practice and move forwards consistently, supported by our Primary Authority Scheme Partners
- Ensure fire risk is considered holistically for a building, considering the physical building, management and occupancy characteristics
- Incorporated consideration for changes to existing and in upcoming legislation



Advantages for specialised housing

- All buildings are risk assessed in accordance with the correct applicable **fire safety guidance** and are consistent
- All fire risk remedial actions are held within one system, making trends and themes of actions easily identifiable, such as training, and person-centered fire risk assessment provision
- Allows us to manage fire risk remedial actions strategically, so we can plan projects, inform our investment strategy and procure contracts more effectively

Challenges

Strategic Management

Concurrent timeframes for fire risk remedial actions

Aligning policies and procedures

Working with multiple care providers

Procurement for specialist works – other legislation

Buildings

Multiple actions in relation to similar themes or trends – programmes of work

Some works identified require significant changes to a building to remediate, such as installation of AOVs, changes to internal layouts, building works, passive fire stopping, and fire door works

Fire Safety Management

Aligning training requirements within GSA

Aligning routine testing and maintenance routines procedures

Working with the multiple care providers to understand each buildings responsibilities and arrangements – policy / procedures

Buildings tenure designations – using consistent language and the correct applicable fire safety guidance

Rolling out new teams and structures to support the wider organisation



Significant findings in Specialised Housing - Examples

Means of escape issues beyond the scope of a Type 1 FRA: –

- Inner room scenarios and other internal layout issues
- Person centred approach and providing training to those who undertake them
- Items in means of escape
- Training
- Practical actions such as hard standing for external escape routes and making exit gates more accessible

Significant findings in Specialised Housing - Example

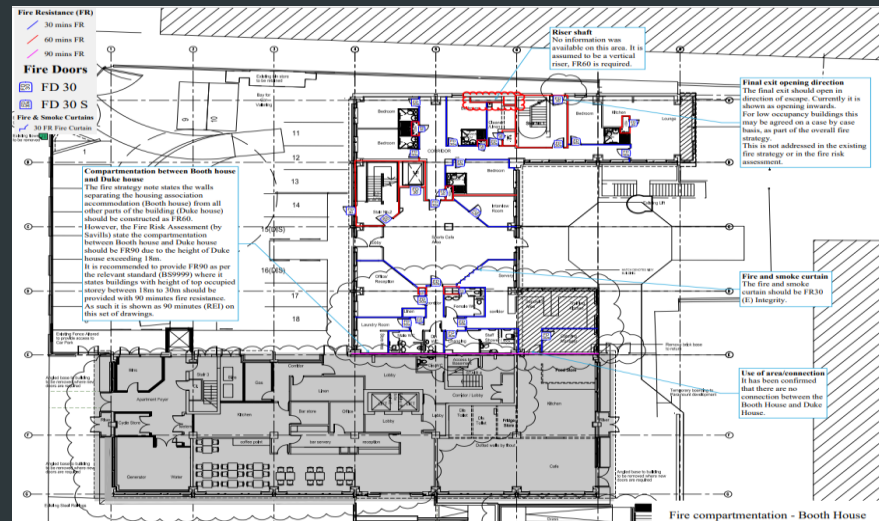
Booth House

Passive fire safety project instigated by FRA findings

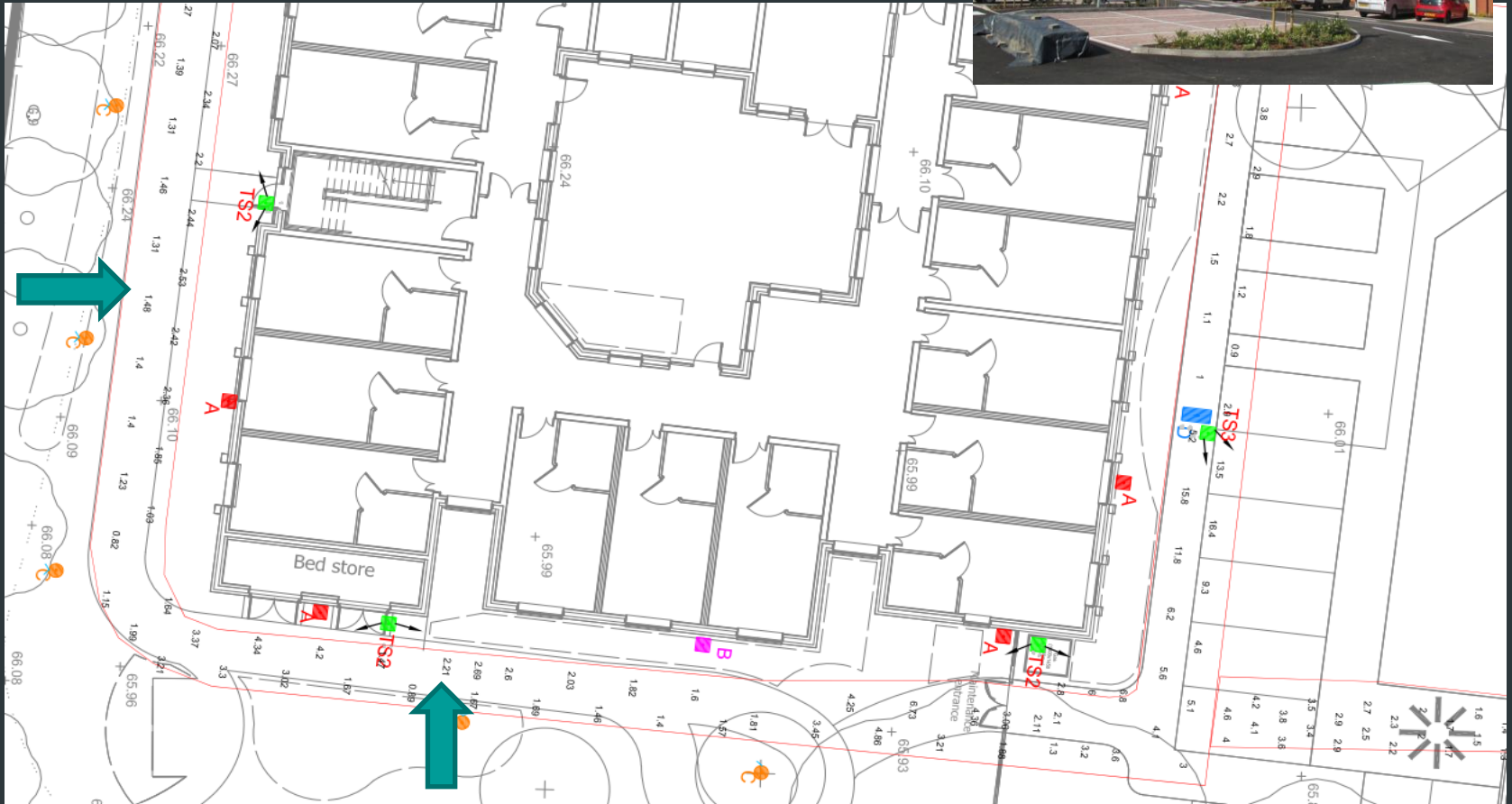
Fire strategy drawings

Project planning and coordination with other works

Significant works and investment in passive fire safety measures



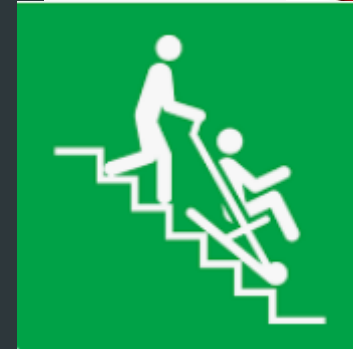
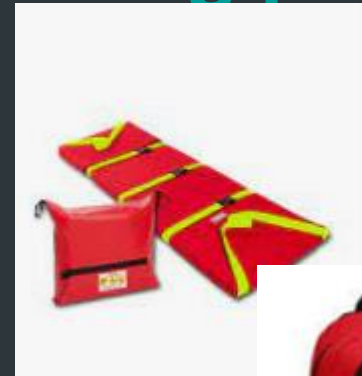
Bowbrook – Extra Care



Training project in Residential Care Premises and Supported Housing providing care

Current project reviewing and aligning our Fire Safety training, including providing and ensuring our fire drills include: -

- The practical use of evacuation equipment
- To the buildings evacuation plan
- Are realistic, timed correctly and centred towards those who occupy each building
- Further training to staff who are involved in completing PEEPs and PCFRAs



Fire Safety within GSA – the year ahead

- Expanded Building Safety Team, with new roles to support addressing the fire risk actions and to provide support to those working in Specialised Housing
- Developing a GSA strategy – further alignment
- Risk assessed programmes of work
- Sharing of Fire Risk Assessments and of fire safety data/ information with our partners, care providers, occupiers and Customers
- Technical fire safety support

