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| Our Reference High Rise/Letters/ResidentBalconySafetyDecember19Contact:- highrise@manchesterfire.gov.ukDate: December 2019 |  |
|  | **Chief Fire Officer**: Jim WallaceGreater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service146 Bolton RoadSwintonManchester M27 8USTelephone 0161 736 5866www.manchesterfire.gov.uk |

Dear Resident,

**Re: Winter Balcony Fire Safety Advice**

I am writing on behalf of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) to ask for your co-operation in staying safe from fire at your premises.

You may have seen in the media concerns about the safety of some balconies following a number of significant fires.

GMFRS has shared the advice from the Government with Housing Providers and Managing Agents and asked them to take steps to reduce the risk of fires on balconies. Residents of flats have an important role to play in this and we have recently been made aware of quantities of combustible items including possible sources of ignition on resident’s balconies across Greater Manchester.

I would like to ask you not to use barbecues, fire pits or chiminea’s on balconies under any circumstance, they can be extremely dangerous and pose a real risk of fire in any circumstances due to the close proximity to the buildings. If you have a wooden balcony the risk is even greater.

In order to reduce the risk of a fire occurring at your premises, please follow our balcony fire safety advice:

* Never store flammable materials like gas on your balcony
* Reduce clutter and try and keep items on the balcony to a minimum
* If you smoke make sure you stub cigarettes out and NEVER flick them off your balcony
* Never use fire pits, chiminea’s or barbecues on balconies under any circumstances
* Don’t set off fireworks from balconies

The best way to stay safe is to prevent a fire happening - you can find information about home safety and how to book a Safe and Well visit on our website (search ‘GMFRS fire safety advice’ online) or by calling us on 0800 555 815.

We recommend that you test your smoke alarm every week.

Make sure you understand the fire safety plan for your building and follow it.

If you notice another resident in your block not following this fire safety advice in the first instance please contact your landlord or the managing agent for the building. If you still have concerns let us know by emailing highrise@manchesterfire.gov.uk detailing your concerns.

Yours faithfully,



Tony Hunter

Assistant County Fire Officer & Director of Protection

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service