

British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association



PRESS RELEASE

27 June 2023

The chief executive of the British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association (BAFSA), Ali Perry, has praised a recent report in *Inside Housing* magazine that highlights the shockingly low-level of sprinklers retro-fitted in high-rise residential buildings since the Grenfell tragedy – that took place in June 2017.

The data from the *Inside Housing* report was gathered from 37 large social housing providers in England and found that out of 1,768 of these, only 334 (18.9%) had been fitted with sprinklers, and over half of these were fitted in one local authority (Birmingham).

Ali says: “It is hard to believe that after the tragic events of Grenfell, other priorities outweigh the provision of fire sprinklers in similar buildings that could prevent a reoccurrence of such a tragedy. I am grateful to *Inside Housing* for shining a light on the lack of progress in introducing key measures that could significantly reduce the chances of such an incident occurring again.”

He added that while there is currently no requirement to retrofit fit sprinklers to existing blocks, the risk is no less and possibly greater than for new blocks. “The Callow Mount Sprinkler Retrofit Project report published in 2012 demonstrated that it is both cost effective and practical to retrofit automatic fire sprinklers in occupied high-rise social housing blocks without disturbing residents.”

The Callow Mount project was the first high-rise retrofit sprinkler installation in the UK at an occupied 13-floor residential block in Sheffield. The project was funded and directed by BAFSA for the Sprinkler Coordination Group (SCG). Work at the building was undertaken in September 2011 by Domestic Sprinklers, with the main objective of seeing if it was practical to fit a sprinkler system without relocating residents. Fitting sprinklers in 47 flats, plus utility rooms, common areas, bin stores and an office it took less than four weeks to do all the work and no occupants had to be relocated.

A copy of BAFSA's Callow Mount report can be downloaded here: https://www.bafsa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/2017/09/CALLOWMOUNT_web0407LR_lowres.pdf

To read the Inside Housing report visit: <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/insight/six-years-on-from-grenfell-why-do-most-social-housing-blocks-still-not-have-sprinklers-or-fire-alarms-81879>

Press enquiries for BAFSA:

Claire Mahoney

Marketing and communications manager

Tel: 07812106992

Email: claire.mahoney@bafsa.org.uk