

Committee(s)	Dated:
Barbican Residential Committee	15 June 2020
Subject: Proposed Replacement of Front Entrance Door Sets	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Decision
Report author: Paul Murtagh Assistant Director Barbican & Property Services	

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval to submit a supplementary Capital Bid for the proposed replacement of front entrance door sets to all residential properties on the Barbican Estate to ensure that they meet the requirements of the current Building Regulations in relation to fire safety.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the recommendation from officers to submit a supplementary Capital Bid for the replacement of front entrance door sets to all residential properties on the Barbican Estate with new modern replacements that comply with Approved Document B – Fire Safety of the Building Regulations.

Main Report

Background

1. As Members will be aware from previous reports, as part of its approach to improving fire safety across the whole of the Barbican Residential Estate, random sample testing of a limited number of front entrance door sets to individual flats in the Barbican has been carried out. This has been an arduous process as a result of the planning requirements relating to the temporary and permanent replacement door sets and, the lack of available testing facilities across the country.

Considerations

2. Three different types of door sets have been tested so far to date and the details of the tests are summarised below:

252 Shakespeare Tower

Description: Latched, single leaf, single acting door set with side screen and over panel.
Tested by: Exova Warringtonfire, High Wycombe
Times to failure: Integrity – 35 minutes
Insulation – 24 minutes

When this door set was originally installed, it complied fully with the Building Regulations at the time. The destructive testing has shown that the integrity of the door (resistance to fire) exceeds the modern standard of 30 minutes. In terms of the insulation test, the door failed to meet the modern standard, albeit marginally (six minutes). However, the real problem with this door set, was its failure to deal with the passage of smoke. The test showed that smoke was penetrating the door set after a very short period (just over two minutes).

9 Breton House

Description: Latched, single leaf, single acting door set with side service cupboard.
Tested by: Centrum Techniki Okretowej, Poland
Times to failure: Integrity (Door set) – 18 minutes
Integrity (Service cupboard) – 22 minutes

When this door set was originally installed, it complied fully with the Building Regulations at the time. The destructive testing has shown that the integrity of the door set (resistance to fire) does not meet the modern standard of 30 minutes (failed after 18 and 22 minutes). In addition, the door set failed to deal with the passage of smoke. The test showed that smoke was penetrating the door set and service cupboard after a very short period (less than two minutes in both cases).

86 Thomas More House

Description: Latched, single leaf, single acting door set with side cupboard door and glazed side screen.
Tested by: Laboratory BadanOgniwych, Poland
Times to failure: Integrity (Door set) – 5 minutes
Integrity (Service cupboard) – 5 minutes
Integrity (Glazed screen) – 8 minutes

When this door set was originally installed, it complied fully with the Building Regulations at the time. The destructive testing has shown that the integrity of the door set (resistance to fire) does not meet the modern standard of 30 minutes (both doors failed after 5 minutes).

3. The planned destructive door set testing (including associated screens and panels) for the Barbican Estate is now complete. The destructive testing has shown that all door sets tested fail to meet the modern standards for fire resistance.

4. The three door sets tested are typical of the design and construction of almost all the front door sets installed in homes on the Barbican Estate. Moreover, all the door sets on the Barbican Estate, except for a very small number replaced as part of the repairs service, were installed when the Barbican Estate was built. It is safe to say that the three tested door sets will be very representative of all the door sets on the Barbican Estate.
5. It should be noted that the construction of the Barbican Estate and its inherent design, to some extent, mitigate the risk of the sub-standard doors. Such mitigating factors include:
 - mainly concrete construction;
 - most flats have access to more than one escape route;
 - bespoke design of ventilation and smoke control system.
6. Despite the mitigating factors outlined in 5 above, it is the view of officers that the residual risk is too serious and, it is recommended that a programme be funded and developed for the replacement of front door sets to all residential properties on the Barbican Estate with new modern replacements that comply with Approved Document B – Fire Safety of the Building Regulations.

Financial Considerations

7. The estimated cost of the replacement of front door sets to all residential properties on the Barbican Estate is between £15 and £20 million. It should be noted however, that, at this stage, this is a broad estimate only. The estimate can only be adequately verified once a detailed survey of all the blocks on the Barbican Estate has been carried out.
8. Given the scope and size of the project and the Listed status of the Barbican Estate, it is likely that the replacement of all front door sets will take between 2 and 3 years to complete.
9. Counsel's opinion has been sought on whether the cost of replacing the fire door sets on the Barbican Estate can be recovered from leaseholders by way of their service charge. Counsel has advised that these works would be classed as 'Improvements' and, in accordance with the provisions of the lease, are not recoverable via the service charge. This means that the cost of replacing all door sets on the Barbican Estate will be borne solely by the Corporation.

Conclusion

10. Based on the outcome of the destructive door set testing on the Barbican Estate, where, all door sets tested failed to meet the modern standards for fire safety, Members are asked to approve the recommendation from officers to submit a supplementary Capital Bid for the replacement of front entrance door sets to all residential properties on the Barbican Estate with new modern replacements that comply with Approved Document B – Fire Safety of the Building Regulations.

Appendices

None

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