



December 2024

CASE STUDY

IMPROVING FIRE DETECTION
SYSTEMS IN VULNERABLE
HOUSING WITH MOSSCARE ST
VINCENT'S HOUSING GROUP

TOGETHER WITH



EXPLORING HOW MOSSCARE
ST VINCENT'S HOUSING GROUP
IMPROVED FIRE SAFETY BY
PROVIDING REAL-TIME
MONITORING FOR
VULNERABLE RESIDENTS.

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Mosscare St Vincent's Housing Group (MSV) is a social landlord working across the North West of England. The region is experiencing a combination of significant housing challenges, including rising house prices, an increased demand for social housing, and a growing homelessness rate. In fact, at the end of 2023, the North West saw the highest number of rough sleepers, experiencing a 49% increase on 2022, according to Petrus. This correlates Centre Point's statement that youth homelessness increased by 4%.

MSV's role is becoming increasingly essential, as they specialise in providing safe and secure homes for many marginalised people, such as:

- Foyers for Young People in Manchester and Blackburn
- Specialist housing for homeless individuals
- Later Living Schemes for the over 55's
- HAPPi schemes for older people

YOUNGER PERSONS FOYERS

The Younger Persons Foyers scheme is targeted at some of MSV's sites occupied by young people, aged between 16 and 25, who have experienced homelessness trauma or other challenges. These young individuals are provided with self-contained flats, where they can learn to live independently for up to 2 years. The scheme offers a unique opportunity for young people who require some extra support, but are committed to training and/or education, providing them with their own flat, a bespoke support package, security service and resident activities.

COMPLIANCE AND SAFETY

In providing these key services, MSV must comply with British Standard BS 5839-6, which details the various grades and categories for fire alarm systems. It provides specific recommendations for fire alarm systems in all domestic properties, including where and how many alarms should be installed, and how they're tested and maintained.

However, within the Younger Person Foyers, MSV unfortunately experiences issues including:

- Mains power failure (due to lack of credit on the electricity metre)
- Alarm head removals
- Damaged and misused devices
- Lack of visibility of activation

These issues are frequent and can put the lives of residents at risk as they may not be alerted in the case of emergency. Furthermore, they also prevent MSV from being able to identify trends and reoccurring events within their properties. To address these problems, MSV has partnered with Aico to implement a new project focused on improving the visibility of BS 5839-6, and the fire detection systems installed within the apartments of the residential accommodation. The project involves installing state-of-the-art, interlinked fire alarms and providing a higher level of education to both staff and tenants.

By addressing these issues, MSV will not only ensure compliance with the highest fire safety standards, but create a safer living environment for young people, reducing the risk of fire-related incidents.



IMPROVING FIRE DETECTION

Aico's Relationship Manager for Greater Manchester, Martin Przewozny, supported MSV throughout the project, advising them on the installation and retrofitting of devices:



Ei3014 Heat Alarm was installed across the properties to provide enhanced detection for heat build-up from large flaming fires. The alarm is equipped with a tried and tested high-performance thermistor heat sensor to provide a fast response when the trigger temperature of 58°C is reached. Additionally, it can differentiate smoke from steam to help reduce the number of false alarms activated.

The Ei3016 Optical Smoke Alarm contains a high-performance optical smoke sensor to detect slow, smouldering fires. The alarm is fitted with an integrated mesh insect screen and built-in dust compensation with a unique self-monitoring mechanism.



Both alarms are also equipped with a 10-year tamper-proof lithium battery back-up, ensuring that even if mains power isn't available for a period of time, protection is maintained throughout the properties. By implementing Aico's 3000 Series alarms, MSV's Younger Persons Foyers scheme prioritised resident safety with a future-proof solution.

Furthermore, the SmartLINK function was enabled on some of the existing devices that were not replaced as part of the project, retrofitting the Ei3000MRF SmartLINK Module. This allows for SmartLINK interconnection and data extraction from Aico's 3000 Series alarms via the gateway. It also allows for multiple alarms within the property to be interconnected, so when an alarm is triggered, they all sound for audibility.

The Ei1000G SmartLINK Gateway was also positioned throughout the properties in a suitable location that ensured both power and signalling requirements. The gateway collects real-time data from connected devices, and transmits this to the online HomeLINK portal, providing full visibility on the existing fire alarms installed, and facilitating informed maintenance decisions.



ENHANCING PEACE OF MIND

Martin also provided MSV with training on the use and configuration of the HomeLINK Portal and setting up alerts and notifications for activations. To account for out-of-hours incidents, the team purchased a specific device to be used by security and concierge support, ensuring full visibility 24/7.

This increased visibility offers an abundance of benefits to MSV and their residents in Younger Persons Foyers:





- **Improved Compliance Standards:** MSV's implementation of the 3000 Series alarms exceeds the minimum requirements of building regulations, reflecting their commitment to safety and quality, fostering peace of mind for residents.



- **Unparalleled Resident Safety:** The advanced detection capabilities and reliability of the 3000 Series alarms provide early warnings of potential fire risks whilst minimising the occurrence of false alarms, ensuring a much higher level of protection.



- **Increased Peace of Mind:** With an improved knowledge and understanding that their homes are fitted with a reliable fire detection system can provide residents with a greater peace of mind, contributing to the overall safety and well-being of the communities that MSV works to create. This also provides reassurance to staff, especially as the alerts and data given via the gateway provide full visibility of the properties.

Working with Martin Przewozny and Aico on this project has been a highly positive experience for MSV. As the Head of Building Safety and Compliance, my priority is the safety and well-being of our residents, especially those in our higher-risk schemes for young people. Martin's expertise and dedication have been instrumental in enhancing the fire detection systems across our properties, providing us with real-time visibility and peace of mind. His proactive approach and deep understanding of our needs have made this collaboration seamless. We are grateful for his partnership and the tangible improvements we've seen as a result.

*Callum Jones, Head of Building Safety & Compliance,
Mosscares St Vincent's Housing Group*





SAFE AND SECURE HOUSING

Mosscare St Vincent's Housing Group has successfully implemented a comprehensive fire safety solution that not only meets regulatory requirements but also prioritises the safety and well-being of their vulnerable residents. By partnering with Aico to install advanced fire detection systems, MSV has demonstrated a commitment to providing safe and secure housing.



As a Relationship Manager at Aico, I am proud to support Mosscare St Vincent's Housing Group (MSV) in their mission to provide safe and secure homes for some of the most vulnerable communities across the Northwest of England. MSV's commitment to fostering a supportive environment for young people, is truly inspiring. By integrating advanced fire detection systems in their residential accommodations, we aim to enhance safety and provide real-time monitoring to address any potential issues promptly. Together, we are working to ensure that every resident can feel safe and supported in their home.

*Martin Przewozny, Relationship Manager,
Aico*



To learn more about Aico's 3000 Series alarms and how they offer 'full circle' protection, please visit:

www.aico.co.uk/series/3000-series/