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### **ITN interviews PFPF about fire safety concerns**

A spokesman for the Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF) told ITN the fire industry was 'extremely concerned' about fire safety and the competence of those assessing risks. Refurbishment by well-meaning Local Authority landlords, even if they employ apparently reputable tradesman, can pose a real fire risk according to Wilf Butcher, of the PFPF, who was interviewed on ITN's *London Tonight* on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 6.15pm.

The Passive Fire Protection Federation was asked to comment following the two huge fires in London apartment blocks in the last six months. Both the fire in Lakanal House, Camberwell, where six people died, and the most recent one in Peckham spread unusually fast.

Before 2005 an apartment block would need to have an up-to-date fire certificate but now, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, it is the landlord's responsibility to see that these properties are safe, and to assess the likely risk. "One of the problems our industry faces at the moment is that there is no qualification for a Risk Assessment." said Wilf Butcher, also Chief Executive Officer for the Association for Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP), "Our entire industry is very concerned."

Many social housing flats like those in Camberwell and Peckham are designed to have 60 minutes of 'containment' before the fire can spread to a neighbouring flat. So if fire breaks out in one flat it should be an hour before the flames and products of combustion can penetrate to another flat. Refurbishment and repairs can compromise the built-in fire protection - but many landlords aren't trained in fire safety and don't

know what to check. Replacing Fire Doors (and the fire resistant glass within the panels), and ensuring that the holes made for wiring for your satellite dish, waste pipes, water pipes or duct-work etc are sealed and fire safe, are just some of the areas for concern for the PFPF.

For guidance or expert comment on built-in ('passive') fire protection measures visit [www.pfpf.org](http://www.pfpf.org).

**END**

**334 words**

**Image attached: Wilf Butcher, of the Passive Fire Protection Federation**

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**Editors' notes:** The Passive Fire Protection Federation (PFPF - [www.pfpf.org](http://www.pfpf.org)) is dedicated to growing awareness and giving advice on fire protection, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO). The Federation brings together the collective expertise of the passive fire protection industry and provides a central forum so that the Industry speaks with one voice to articulate the benefits and value of passive fire protection in the achievement of fire safe building design and construction.

Passive fire protection is the primary measure integrated within the constructional fabric of a building to provide inherent fire safety and protection by responding against flame, heat and smoke to maintain the fundamental requirements of building compartmentation, structural stability, fire separation and safe means of escape.

Passive fire protection measures achieve their intended purpose by raising the fire resistance of the structure, protecting the structure against the effects of fire, reducing fire spread through secondary ignition, limiting the movement of flame and smoke, and minimising the danger of fire-induced collapse or structural distortion.

Passive fire protection design, incorporating passive fire protection materials, systems and assemblies, serves by fire containment to protect life, safeguard the building structure, protect

assets, maintain building serviceability after fire, minimise rebuild costs, and facilitate quick business recovery and continuity.

Our website [www.pfpf.org](http://www.pfpf.org) carries advice on what to check and best practice in all passive fire protection measures.

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