



Elevating fire safety  
through holistic design  
and integrated specification

Optima





In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, sweeping regulatory reforms, such as the [Building Safety Act](#), have placed construction fire safety processes under intense scrutiny. The act's focus is high-rise residential buildings, but it paves the way for inevitable future regulations impacting commercial buildings.

**Will the commercial construction world be ready?**

This e-book reveals how to improve fire safety in construction through a collaborative, holistic approach that prioritises safety from a project's first day. Discover how integrating fire-resistant designs from the planning stage will not only ready your projects for tomorrow's safety standards but also ensure the highest level of project efficiency.

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*It's time for the industry to tackle fire safety projects in a holistic way, rather than the current siloed approach where construction products are specified and procured individually and without proper consideration for their direct interfaces.*

Peter Long  
Fire & Certification Director, Optima

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# The current fragmented approach to fire safety

The issue with current fire safety approaches in construction is that they're siloed. Products are often specified and procured in isolation, which can lead to overlooked critical interfaces, compromising building safety and occupant wellbeing.

Confidence amongst architects and designers in specifying passive fire protection systems is also alarmingly low. In fact, **only 14% of building control professionals feel confident understanding fire safety system specifications.**

Moreover, tight deadlines often pressure specifiers into making rushed, last-minute decisions that fail to consider all safety-critical elements, putting the entire project's integrity at risk.

## The best solution?

A collaborative, holistic strategy that bridges knowledge gaps, prioritises safety from the first day and ensures the highest level of fire safety.

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Only **14%** of building control professionals feel confident understanding fire safety system specifications

**Specification**  
Online

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# How to achieve a holistic approach to fire safety

Holistic design integrates all aspects of fire safety during the architectural and planning phases, creating environments that prioritise long-term safety and responsibility

## Incorporating fire safety into each phase of construction involves:

- Early collaboration amongst architects, specifiers, engineers and fire safety experts
- Utilising advanced technologies like BIM for precise safety modelling
- Adhering to updated fire safety regulations that advocate for continuous improvement and the integration of new technologies
- Never sacrificing safety for cost savings

## Elevating fire safety with third-party testing & certification

Third-party testing and certification are critical components in upholding the highest fire safety standards and ensuring regulatory compliance.

Enhancing fire safety standards requires focusing on the following key aspects:

- **Comprehensive testing:** Validates the effectiveness and reliability of solutions under real-world conditions
- **Understanding certification documentation:** Despite the complexity of test evidence and assessments, it is crucial that every stakeholder throughout the supply chain understands and verifies that products meet necessary third-party credentials. This ensures collective accountability and higher levels of competency.
- **Prioritising safety:** Safety must be prioritised over commercial interests or cost savings, regardless of when in the project programme safety-based decisions are made.

## Taking charge through knowledge and training

**“In the coming years we must explore ways to standardise levels of competency within the industry, starting with better training on products and systems as well as tools that improve communication.**

**To ensure quality and accuracy, project teams must also have the knowledge to verify information provided by third-party fabricators. Effective Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is crucial for enhancing technical competence in fire safety. Responsible persons should actively seek to learn about safety-critical products from experts, like Optima, who offer RIBA accredited CPD sessions to share their expertise.”**

Peter Long, Fire & Certification Director, Optima





# Unlocking fire safety excellence: An Optima case study

Discover Optima's holistic approach to fire safety through this real-world example

**Case study:**  
Intermediate Capital Group's HQ

**Location:** London  
**Architect:** HLW Intl  
**Contractor:** ISG

**Challenges:**  
Intermediate Capital Group (ICG) wanted to create a stylish, modern office in the heart of London, prioritising both acoustic and visual privacy. The project needed to integrate cutting-edge partitioning solutions to create an open yet private workspace, maintaining high standards of fire safety.

**Design integration:**  
Optima collaborated closely with HLW International and ISG to integrate bespoke glass partitioning solutions that met ICG's specific needs in safety, practicality and aesthetics. This included **Revolution 54 Plus** double glazed partitioning systems and **switchable glass** partitions for flexible, private meeting spaces.

**Acoustic & fire safety:**  
To meet the requirements of excellent acoustic and fire safety, Optima installed Revolution 54 Plus and **Revolution 100** double glazed partitions, providing up to Rw51dB sound insulation. Fire safety was enhanced with **Technishield 50** doors and side screens, offering up to 30 minutes of fire integrity.

**Impact & legacy:**  
Optima's solutions ensured a balance between an open, modern office space and high standards of privacy and safety, showcasing Optima's capability to meet complex architectural challenges.





# Optima's unwavering commitment to continuous improvement

As construction regulations evolve, Optima leads by example, ensuring that fire safety is a primary focus from the very beginning of the construction process



Our forward-thinking consultation, system design and third-party testing services ensure that our products consistently exceed required legislative and industry-specific safety standards.



Through rigorous research, testing and industry collaboration, we actively advocate for raising fire safety benchmarks across construction. Our commitment to continuous improvement assures clients that their projects will epitomise industry best practices.



For more detailed insights or to speak with one of our experts, contact us. Together, we can foster a holistic approach to fire safety and achieve new levels of efficiency in construction projects.

## Our Global Clientele

We have successfully delivered projects for leading global companies, including:



Optima





“...exceptional...this is exactly  
what a CPD **should** be...”

Associate Partner  
Fletcher Priest Architects



Peter Long  
Fire & Certification  
Director



## Book our RIBA accredited CPDs

### Specifying Fully Glazed Fire Doors & Partitions

With a comprehensive focus on fire resistance and its measurement, this landmark seminar delves into the necessary requirements for designing buildings for fire safety, while effectively incorporating glazed elements as part of passive fire safety measures.

### Understanding the reaction to fire of partition surfaces

This CPD guides specifiers through the complex issue of reaction to fire and gives them confidence in accurate and compliant specification. Participants should be able to confidently specify wall linings, understand test evidence limitations, and question manufacturers effectively regarding fire test evidence and classifications.

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