

Fire Safety (UK)

Here is some information about the Fire Safety Order 2005, which came into force on 1st **October 2006**. As from that date, old fire safety certificates cease to be effective and new regulations for running a fire safety assessment come into operation.

There is a website <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/fire-prevention-and-rescue> on which you will find information about the new regulations.

More info on fire safety [here](#) and [here](#) (in the workplace)

Communities:

There may be exemption from some of the new fire regulations for religious residential communities i.e. less strict regulations apply than would in a strictly commercial property.

There is an “explanatory memorandum” which is accessible [here](#)

At point 46 there is the relevant clause which exempts religious communities, quoted here:
46. The Act itself exempts certain other HMOs from licensing requirements, namely those owned by the police, fire and rescue and health service bodies, those where the local authority or a registered social landlord has control, and HMOs occupied principally for the purposes of a religious community (except certain blocks of flats that were not converted in accordance with relevant building regulations).

Obviously we want our buildings to be as safe as possible, but some of the new regulations are very strict and could involve a lot of expense. So, it is worth investigating what your legal obligations are.

Retreat Centres:

When a fire officer visited Padmaloka he was happy to classify it as a residential property (which meant less stringent requirements). He made a few minor recommendations, which Padmaloka were happy to implement. The reason for the re-classification was that Padmaloka is not a hotel or a hostel – they are closer to a monastery because they have a number of people who live there, some of the ‘teachers’ having lived there for quite a number of years. They also don’t charge people a flat cost when they go there – they have a rate they ask for but also are happy to negotiate reductions and also for people to come sometimes for free.