

‘Don’t let safety go out of the window’ – UK hotels and student accommodation call

Submitted by: Nurture Media

Monday, 1 March 2021

Hotel owners and student landlords are being urged to ensure buildings are safe amid government guidelines on allowing fresh air inside to stem the spread of Covid.

Health campaigns have highlighted the importance of opening windows to allow fresh air indoors to protect people against coronavirus. But with travellers forced to quarantine in hotels and students preparing to return to universities, safety experts say stringent checks should be completed to prevent accidents.

While government advice is to make sure fresh air can circulate through open windows, all public organisations have a legal duty to keep people safe, with experts warning this means they shouldn’t open windows too wide.

Other types of establishments such as hotels, now with a greater need for safety as guests are quarantined, and university halls of residences and student lets, are being urged to risk assess the need for window restrictors to prevent accidents.

The call comes from bosses at Queens Award-winning manufacturer Jackloc, who say they fear adherence to follow sound advice on letting in fresh air may mean aspects of window safety are overlooked. They say the hotel and student accommodation sectors should follow the example set by the care industry, where window safety is paramount at all times – not just during a pandemic.

Eric Collins, managing director of Jackloc, based in Lutterworth, Leicestershire, said: “Now more than ever owners of hospitality businesses and student accommodation need to know that people they welcome to their premises are safe.

“Window restrictors are used in hotels all over the world but there is still room for improvement. This is a pressing concern as people now have to quarantine in hotels where owners are rightly concerned about the spread of Covid.

“Sadly, we do read of dreadful accidents where people suffer significant injuries or sadly lose their lives after falling from a height through an open window. Tragedies like this are something we can prevent with the right guidance and safety measures.

“It’s also time-critical for student landlords. They have to be ready to demonstrate that accommodation has rigorous safety standards. That includes keeping windows restricted in how far they can be opened. It can be difficult to manage students’ safety while still allowing them freedom and autonomy but we have to have their well-being in the front of our minds.

“Every building’s windows may have different safety requirements and it’s vital that owners find reputable advice on what’s needed. The care industry is a great example of where window safety is a priority and will always be considered during any risk assessment.

“All sectors should follow that example. The last thing anyone needs right now is for building owners to be cutting corners to save costs or effort.”

Eric added that he was encouraged by widespread efforts in the care sector already to address window safety issues.

Chris Jackson, chairman of the National Association for Safety and Health in Care Services, said: “The prevention of falls from windows has always been an issue and should always be high on the list of priorities.

“In the social care sector, it is higher priority because there are individuals who have been identified as being vulnerable. If, as a result of Covid, there needs to be extra ventilation, then current safety measures need to be reviewed to ensure people remain safe.”

ENDS

For journalist enquiries, please call Eric on 07831 483126

Or email: Eric.Collins@jackloc.com