# Fire ravages two floors of Edinburgh's Banana Flats as safety concerns intensify



A significant fire broke out last night at Cables Wynd House, a notorious tower block in Edinburgh known colloquially as the 'Banana Flats.' Local MP Tracy Gilbert shared alarming footage of the incident on social media, urging residents in need of assistance to reach out. The fire ignited at approximately 10.50pm, prompting a swift response from emergency services, which dispatched nine fire engines to combat the blaze.

Flames were seen pouring from a two-floor flat within the complex, with thick plumes of black smoke drifting into the night sky. Fire crews worked diligently through the early hours, successfully bringing the flames under control by around 7am this morning. Fortunately, no injuries have been reported, although the flat involved appears to have suffered extensive damage.

The cause of the fire remains undetermined, with police currently investigating the circumstances surrounding this dangerous incident. The building itself has a storied past; it was previously featured in the acclaimed film *Trainspotting*, described as the home of the character Sick Boy. In January 2017, it received A-list status from Historic Environment Scotland for its architectural significance, regarded as a prime example of brutalist design.

Cables Wynd House has long been a focal point of both admiration and concern. In past incidents, the building has been the site of emergencies, including a kitchen fire in 2013 that required the rescue of a family, highlighting the ongoing need for effective fire safety protocols within high-rise buildings. Additionally, as reflected in more recent reports, residents have expressed dissatisfaction with living conditions, citing issues such as dampness, mould, and malfunctioning lifts.

In light of these challenges, the City of Edinburgh Council is investing approximately £69 million in essential repairs and refurbishments to both Cables Wynd House and a nearby tower block, Linksview House. This redevelopment aims to modernise the aging facilities, ensuring they are safer, more comfortable, and better suited to the needs of current and future residents.

Despite its striking design and place in the city's heritage narrative, the juxtaposition between its architectural importance and the pressing concerns facing its inhabitants points to a larger conversation about urban living and tenant safety in Edinburgh. The ongoing investigation into last night’s fire will be keenly watched, both for its implications on current safety measures and as a reflection of the challenges still facing Edinburgh's high-rise living spaces.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/huge-fire-breaks-out-edinburgh-35352953> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-21712153> - In 2013, a family was rescued from a kitchen fire in a fifth-floor flat at Cables Wynd House in Leith, Edinburgh. Firefighters extinguished a pan of food that had caught fire, and the residents—a 29-year-old man, a 24-year-old woman, and two children aged 7 and 3—were treated for suspected smoke inhalation at the scene. The incident highlights the importance of fire safety measures in high-rise residential buildings.
3. <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/multi-storey-blocks/cables-wynd-house-links-view-house> - The City of Edinburgh Council is investing approximately £69 million in essential repairs and improvements to Cables Wynd House and Linksview House in Leith. These 1960s-built high-rise blocks are undergoing major refurbishments to address issues related to their age and condition, aiming to make them safer, warmer, and more comfortable for residents. The improvements include accessible walkways, enclosed lobby areas, external concrete repairs, and new heating systems.
4. <https://www.onenewspage.com/n/UK/1zpnzuy8wu/Emergency-crews-scramble-to-Edinburgh-flats-amid-ongoing.htm> - In October 2023, emergency crews responded to an ongoing incident at Cables Wynd House in Leith, Edinburgh. Fire engines and an ambulance were spotted at the scene, indicating a significant emergency response. The nature of the incident was not specified, but the presence of multiple emergency vehicles suggests a serious situation requiring immediate attention.
5. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cables_Wynd_House> - Cables Wynd House, also known as the Leith Banana Flats due to its distinctive curved design, is a nine-storey local authority housing block in Leith, Edinburgh. Built between 1962 and 1965, the building has been a notable feature of the Leith skyline. It was awarded an 'A' listing by Historic Environment Scotland in January 2017, recognising it as one of the best examples of 'brutalist' architecture in Scotland.
6. <https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/life-inside-notorious-edinburgh-tower-28283622> - Residents of Cables Wynd House, also known as the 'Banana Flats,' have reported issues such as dampness, mould, pests, and broken lifts. Despite these challenges, the building remains a significant part of Edinburgh's architectural landscape, with its distinctive curved design making it a notable feature in the Leith area.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-41741269> - In 2017, detectives investigated the death of a 37-year-old woman whose body was discovered in her Edinburgh flat at Cables Wynd House. The woman was believed to have been deceased for several months. The death was treated as unexplained, though there appeared to be no suspicious circumstances.