

Golden Thread – An Overview

Introduction

The Building Safety Act, which is the foundation of the new [building safety regime](#) for the construction sector, introduces the requirement for a ‘Golden Thread’ of information for Higher-Risk Buildings (HRBs).

This guide provides an overview of the Golden Thread which is referenced in [four different sets of regulations](#).

The Golden Thread is a new requirement and its implementation is evolving. Build UK’s objective is to help ensure a consistent approach across the supply chain and this guide will be updated as required.

What is the Golden Thread?

The ‘Golden Thread’ is the term used to describe the information and documents that must be collated and stored in order to safely occupy, manage and operate a Higher-Risk Building (HRB) throughout its lifecycle.

It is created by the Client who must establish the electronic format to be used throughout all stages of a project, as set out in [The Building \(Higher-Risk Building Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#). Once handed over to the Principal Accountable Person (PAP) for the building, it must be maintained to reflect any changes within the building and its use.

The Golden Thread is intended to be the ‘single source of truth’ or Common Data Environment for an HRB, containing details of everything that could have an impact on the safety of the building and the people that use it. This includes the products, materials, and systems used; methods of construction; plant, equipment and services installed; and operation and maintenance information.

There is already a requirement under [The Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2015](#) for a Health and Safety File to be provided to the Client which should contain the information needed to ensure the health and safety of any person during any subsequent work, such as maintenance, cleaning, refurbishment or demolition. There are also statutory requirements to provide fire safety information, and Operation & Maintenance (O&M) Manuals are usually provided for the plant, equipment and services installed. Much of this information will be appropriate for including in the Golden Thread. Where Building Information Modelling (BIM) is being used and the relevant information can be easily identified, it may provide the foundation for the Golden Thread.

Further Information

- [The Building Safety Act 2022](#) introduces the requirement to keep and maintain prescribed information about Higher-Risk Buildings (the Golden Thread) in Section 88.
- [The Building \(Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#) set out the requirements for Clients in respect of the Golden Thread.
- [The Higher-Risk Buildings \(Management of Safety Risks etc\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#) set out the requirements for keeping information and documents as part of the Golden Thread.
- [The Higher-Risk Buildings \(Keeping and Provision of Information etc.\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) set out the information that should be included in the Golden Thread.
- [The Building Regulations etc. \(Amendment\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#) set out the additional duties of Designers and Contractors, including the provision and sharing of information for the Golden Thread.

When is a Golden Thread Required?

A Golden Thread is legally required for **all** Higher-Risk Buildings (HRBs) including:

- **Existing HRBs** - Information relevant to the building will need to be brought together, particularly in relation to fire and structural safety risks. Where any maintenance, refurbishment or construction work is undertaken, the Golden Thread will need to be reviewed and updated.
- **HRBs under construction before 1 October 2023 or using the [transitional arrangements](#)** - The Golden Thread should be created as soon as possible from existing information and updated throughout the remainder of the work.
- **New HRBs from 1 October 2023** - The Golden Thread must be in place before building work starts, including information from the design phase.

How Will the Golden Thread be Used?

The Golden Thread will be used as follows:

- During the design and construction phases to collate, record and provide relevant information about the building.
- During the occupation phase by the Principal Accountable Person (PAP) and other Accountable Persons as part of their role in using and operating the building; undertaking maintenance, refurbishment or further construction work; and compiling the [Safety Case Report](#).
- To provide residents with accurate information about their homes and to reassure them that their building is being managed safely.
- To provide the emergency services with relevant information about the building so they can respond appropriately when required. Contact details, copies of the building's floor plans, and details of key firefighting equipment should be available in the [Secure Information Box](#).

Who is Responsible for the Golden Thread?

Type of HRB	Client	Principal Designer	Principal Contractor	Principal Accountable Person	Accountable Person
Existing HRBs				Creating, developing, coordinating and maintaining the Golden Thread Providing information to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable Persons Building Safety Regulator Fire & Rescue Authorities Landlords & Owners Principal Contractors Principal Designers Residents Reviewing and updating the Golden Thread where any maintenance, refurbishment or construction work is undertaken	Providing relevant information and identifying any gaps or omissions
HRBs under construction before 1 October 2023 or using the transitional arrangements	Creating the Golden Thread Setting up the electronic format Providing access to other dutyholders Adding information Passing to the Principal Accountable Person prior to occupation Ensuring dutyholders provide existing information and are aware of their duties to provide information going forwards	Providing existing information Adding to the Golden Thread throughout the design phase Liaising with the Principal Contractor to ensure that design work carried out during the construction phase is included	Providing existing information Adding to the Golden Thread throughout the construction phase Ensuring that information from the supply chain and material suppliers is included	Developing, coordinating and maintaining the Golden Thread Providing information to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable Persons Building Safety Regulator Fire & Rescue Authorities Landlords & Owners Principal Contractors Principal Designers Residents Reviewing and updating the Golden Thread where any maintenance, refurbishment or further construction work is undertaken	Providing relevant information and identifying any gaps or omissions
New HRBs from 1 October 2023	Creating the Golden Thread Setting up the electronic format Providing access to other dutyholders Adding information Passing to the Principal Accountable Person prior to occupation Ensuring dutyholders are aware of their duties to provide information going forwards	Adding to the Golden Thread throughout the design phase Liaising with the Principal Contractor to ensure that design work carried out during the construction phase is included	Adding to the Golden Thread throughout the construction phase Ensuring that information from the supply chain and material suppliers is included	Developing, coordinating and maintaining the Golden Thread Providing information to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable Persons Building Safety Regulator Fire & Rescue Authorities Landlords & Owners Principal Contractors Principal Designers Residents Reviewing and updating the Golden Thread where any maintenance, refurbishment or further construction work is undertaken	Providing relevant information and identifying any gaps or omissions

What is the Format Required for the Golden Thread?

There are two sets of regulations that set out the requirements for establishing and updating the Golden Thread:

- [The Higher-Risk Buildings \(Management of Safety Risks etc\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#) - Regulation 7
- [The Building \(Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#) - Regulation 31.

Although different wording is used in the two sets of regulations, the key requirements for the Golden Thread are that it must be:

- kept in an **electronic** format
- **capable of being transferred** electronically without data being lost or corrupted
- **accurate** and up to date
- **intelligible** to the intended readers of the data, with any key needed to understand it provided
- **accessible** and made available to other dutyholders upon request
- **secure** from unauthorised access
- only **changed in accordance with procedures** which record the person who made the change and the date
- **consistent** in language, terminology and definitions.

The Regulations do **not** prescribe any particular format for the Golden Thread; however, ensuring that relevant information can be easily identified and accessed by the Principal Accountable Person (PAP) is key to making sure the building is maintained and operated safely.

What Should be Included in the Golden Thread?

Schedule 1 of [The Higher-Risk Buildings \(Keeping and Provision of Information etc.\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) lists the information that must be included in the Golden Thread.

It may be useful to set out the required information in 'layers' with the end user in mind, and a structure that could be used is as follows:

- **Building registration information**
 - Name and address
 - Number of residential units
 - Height of the building
 - Number of storeys above ground level
 - Date of completion
- **Certificates and reports**
 - Completion certificate
 - Building Assessment Certificate
 - Safety Case Report
 - Inspection and test reports, including recommendations and actions taken
 - Maintenance records and actions taken
 - Mandatory Occurrence Reports
 - Complaints received and actions taken (within the last seven years)
 - Any enforcement action
- **Inspection regimes**
 - Statutory inspections required
 - Standards to be met

- **Maintenance information**
 - Schedule of planned maintenance for building elements and equipment
 - Dealing with faults
 - Troubleshooting
 - Repair and replacement details
 - Competence requirements for maintenance personnel
- **Building safety management documentation**
 - Evacuation strategy
- **As built drawings**
 - Photographic records of building elements and installations during the construction process
 - Up to date floor plans
- **Safety critical Information** about the building that cannot be compromised such as:
 - Design principles
 - Structural elements
 - Utilities
 - Compartmentation
 - Fire safety systems
 - Alarm systems
 - Evacuation strategy and escape routes
 - Fire doors
 - Firefighting equipment
 - Smoke vents
 - Electrical systems
 - Ventilation systems
 - Window security systems
- **Product specific details**
 - Certification
 - Supplier
 - Material content
- **Refurbishment specific details**
 - Hidden services e.g. smoke vents
 - Passive fire protection e.g. location of fire collars
- **Demolition specific details**
 - Loadbearing elements
 - Post tensioned elements
 - Foundation details

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