How Often Should Structural Inspections Be Carried Out for HRBs and External Staircases?

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, owners and managers of Higher-Risk Buildings (HRBs) have an ongoing duty to actively manage structural safety. This includes planning regular structural inspections to ensure that the building's structural integrity remains sound throughout its life. The Act does not set a fixed interval; instead, it requires a proportionate, continuous, risk-based approach.

Recommended frequency for HRBs (risk-based guidance)

- Comprehensive structural inspections: typically every five years, or more often if deterioration is suspected (e.g., cracking, corrosion, movement).
- Interim visual checks: annually or biennially by competent personnel to spot early signs of damage.
- After significant events: inspect following fire, flood, impact, unusual ground movement, or major refurbishment affecting load-bearing elements.
- Post-remedial verification: confirm structural performance after repairs or strengthening before closing actions.

External staircases — special considerations

- Annual visual checks for corrosion, loose fixings, cracked treads, spalling, ponding water and drainage issues.
- Detailed structural inspection every 3–5 years by a structural engineer, more frequently in coastal or aggressive environments.
- Consider intrusive testing where section loss, rebar corrosion, or fatigue is suspected.
- Ensure safe access and anti-slip measures are maintained; verify fixings and connections for robustness.

Integrating inspection frequency into the Safety Case

- Define intervals for major elements (frames, slabs, foundations, balconies, roofs, external stairs).
- Assign responsibility and competence requirements for each inspection type.
- Set triggers for ad■hoc inspections after incidents or reported concerns.
- Log findings, actions and next review dates in the Golden Thread and Structural Safety Report.

How Structures Made Easy can help

- Chartered Engineer-led structural inspection and maintenance plans aligned to BSR expectations.
- Visual and detailed inspections for HRBs and external structures, with clear risk categorisation.
- Integration of findings into the Safety Case, Golden Thread and regulator-ready Structural Safety Reports.
- Portfolio pricing and fast turnaround for housing associations, local authorities and managing agents.

Need a risk-based inspection plan or external staircase assessment? Contact Structures Made Easy for Chartered Engineer support and BSR-ready reporting.

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