

# OPS016 - Fire Safety Policy

<b>MONITORING FORM</b>	
Department	Operations
Department Director	Diana MacLean
This policy is applicable to	Fire Safety
Author	Bob McGuire
Original Version approved by & date	01/07/2019
Date of last review	
Version number	1
Date of minor modification	
Period of Review	3 years
Date of next review	01/07/2022
Internal /external consultees (if required).	

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Weslo Housing Management (WHM) has a responsibility to maintain all appliances owned by it within its stock to the required standard. This policy explains how the maintenance requirements for Fire Safety will be met. The policy will be supported by a Fire Safety Management Plan providing detailed guidance, procedures and process maps.

## **2. TENANT CONSULTATION**

This policy is based on legislative and regulatory requirements. There has been consultation with internal teams within WHM and tenant representatives.

## **3. SCOPE**

For the purposes of this policy it is deemed to include WHM housing stock, all employees (permanent, temporary or contracted) and any other stakeholder if relevant to the Policy.

## **4. OBJECTIVES**

The key objective of this policy is to describe how WHM will meet its statutory and regulatory requirements in relation to Fire Safety. It also covers how WHM Board of Directors, as Duty Holder, will receive assurance of statutory and regulatory compliance.

The policy includes:

- all properties that fall within the relevant legislation, regulation and guidance in relation to Social Landlords in Scotland
- the undertaking of Fire Safety Checks, and the remedial works and actions arising from the Fire Safety Checks
- cyclical maintenance of
  - Fire safety systems and equipment;
  - Automatic fire detection and alarm systems,
  - emergency lighting,
  - automatically opening smoke vents or smoke control systems,
  - portable fire-fighting equipment,
  - dry or wet risers,
  - sprinkler/mist systems,
- general repair and maintenance activity which could have an impact on fire safety within a building or individual property.

WHM will comply with all current and relevant legislation and specifically as detailed in the following:

- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- Building (Scotland) Act 2003
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

WHM also acknowledges its obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

As a Registered Social landlord WHM must meet the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Scottish Social Housing Charter and the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)

It is essential to ensure that customers, residents, employees and visitors remain safe in its premises (both individual homes and offices).

Failure to properly discharge its legal responsibilities may also result in:

- Prosecution by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service under relevant legislation
- Prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Prosecution under Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- SHR serious detriment judgement.
- Reputational damage.
- Loss of confidence by stakeholders in the organisation.

In order to comply with regulatory standards and legal obligations, and to ensure the safety of its customers, staff, contractors and other visitors to their properties, WHM will:

#### **4.1 Process**

- a. Provide clear lines of responsibility for all properties within the scope of this policy supported by written guidance in the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- b. Ensure that a clear and consistent process including front-line engagement and enforcement, is in place to obtain access to properties to conduct the safety checks and works, including legal action when required.
- c. Proactively assess available data for relevant information about the customer to help gain access (disability, vulnerability, local connections, etc.).
- d. Maintain a process for dealing with unsafe situations in accordance with the regulations.

#### **4.2 Fire Safety Checks**

The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 Regulations requires WHM as Duty Holders (Regulation 23) to maintain the premises and any facilities, equipment and devices for the use by or for the safety of fire-fighters.

Regulation 24 applies the maintenance provision in Regulation 23 to the common parts of private dwellings and the duty applies to a person with control of the common areas (WHM).

WHM will carry out regular checks to ensure the adequate maintenance of all premises and any facilities, equipment and devices for the use by or for the safety of fire-fighters. As part of this exercise we will liaise closely with the local fire and rescue service.

### **4.3 Delivery**

#### **4.3.1 Remedial Works**

- a. Ensure that priorities and completion targets for remedial actions are defined by the competent person undertaking the fire safety checks. Any changes will be agreed by the Fire Safety Group.
- b. All fire safety remedial work should be carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standard, approved code of practice or associated best practice guidance.

#### **4.3.2 Testing and Maintenance (and Repair) of Fire Safety Equipment**

- c. Test and maintain all fire safety equipment within the scope of this policy in accordance with regulatory and statutory requirements and considering manufacturer's requirements.

#### **4.3.3 Domestic Smoke Detection**

- a. Ensure that all properties owned by WHM have mains or battery-operated fire detection systems. Upgrading to mains operated systems across all properties will be part of ongoing investment programmes.
- b. Check smoke detection annually as part of the heating servicing contract or, where properties are not part of heating contracts, through other cyclical maintenance contracts.
- c. Where works are refused by the customer, WHM will treat the situation sensitively but will be clear that the work must be completed to ensure their health and safety and that of others in the property and will take legal action as appropriate and where necessary to undertake required works.
- d. Ensure that residential properties will receive further checks which contribute to reducing the risk of fire, including annual gas and other heating installation checks, electrical safety checks, and portable electrical appliance checks.

#### **4.3.4 Responsive and Planned / Upgrade Works**

- a. Ensure that contractors (internal and external) have a general awareness of fire safety and undertake a risk assessment considering fire safety when undertaking responsive repairs that may have an impact on fire safety. Repairs to be carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standard, approved code of practice or associated good practice guidance.

- b. Ensure contractors maintain suitable method statements relating to fire stopping and compartmentation. Carry out a sample of 'during' and 'post work' inspections to ensure compliance.
- c. Risk assess planned maintenance or upgrade programmes to consider any impact on fire safety. Current reports/examinations/FRAs should be provided together with any historic works records, both responsive and planned.
- d. Ensure that a post project fire safety check is completed by a competent person, independent to the contractor, where the risk assessment indicates a likely impact on existing fire safety measures in a building.

#### **4.4 Management**

- a. Comply with the requirements of the building regulations and other relevant fire safety legislation when carrying out any works.
- b. Prohibit the storage of any items in communal areas and escape routes without WHM's express permission. Maintain a no smoking policy in all communal areas.
- c. Implement a risk-based approach to the periodic inspection of communal areas and escape routes in line with the Fire Safety Management Plan to enforce the above.
- d. Ensure that, where provided, furniture is compliant with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 as amended.
- e. Ask residents to alert WHM to the presence of stored oxygen so that it can alert the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to its presence.
- f. Ask residents to remove any alterations that they have made if the Fire Safety Check indicates that this is required. WHM will take a reasonable approach according to the risk presented but will take enforcement where required.

#### **4.5 Contractors Competency**

- a. Only engage with companies assessed and registered under BAFE SP205-1 in providing fire safety check services. External fire safety check providers (whether individuals or companies) should be able to demonstrate reasonable experience of undertaking fire safety checks in housing stock.
- b. Only engage with contractors assessed as being suitably competent to undertake the work for which they are being considered. Contractors, where possible, should be third party accredited to a nationally recognised scheme, such as BAFE SP203 (relevant part) for fire alarm contractors, BAFE SP101 for fire-fighting equipment etc.
- c. Carry out an assessment of all contractor competencies annually or at change of contract/contractor, as detailed within the Fire Safety Management Plan.

#### **4.6 Internal Competency**

- a. Maintain a skills/training matrix to ensure that all staff undertaking key roles within the scope of this policy have appropriate training.
- b. Will operate a detailed competence framework including regular appraisals as part of the Fire Safety Management Plan.

#### **4.7 Data**

- a. Maintain an up to date Master Database of all properties where it has a responsibility to undertake fire safety checks and/or maintain fire safety equipment as set out in the scope of this policy.
- b. Where a requirement exists, hold information including but not limited to: UPRN, property designation, construction type, building management, shared responsibilities, risk profile, evacuation strategy, type of equipment, manufactures requirements and associated testing/servicing frequency date of the last two fire safety checks and next fire safety check due date.
- c. Maintain current and up to date records of remedial works for the entire portfolio which will detail all recommendations from the fire safety checks. The records will include; address and risk profile of the property, detail of the work item required, priority and target completion, person responsible, when the work was completed and who it was signed off by, and evidence of completion.
- d. Hold fire safety maintenance records electronically in the Master Database by the Technical Team with other Landlord Compliance records. There may be instances where a hard copy is kept on site and these will be detailed in the Management Plan.
- e. Where required, and in agreement with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, provide specific site information within a Gerda Box on site.

#### **4.8 Assurance**

- a. Ensure that all persons involved with the management of fire safety are properly trained and accredited in accordance with this policy.
- b. Where necessary, operate a permit to work system when safety critical work is being carried out.
- c. Carry out works-based assurance activity including checks on certification and post-inspection of onsite works to the level stated within the Fire Safety Management Plan. A proportion of such checks will be carried out by an independent party.
- d. Set a timetable for the review of the Fire Safety Policy and the associated Fire Safety Management Plan.

#### **4.9 Communication**

- a. Operate a Fire Safety Group comprising of a cross organisation team of staff. Terms of Reference of the Group will be included in the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- b. Communicate with staff through training, fire drills, appropriate signage and the intranet.
- c. Communicate with residents through appropriate 'Fire Action' signage in conjunction with other forms of communication provided on a regular basis such as web-site, newsletters, leaflets and home information packs.
- d. Engage in a regime of regular communication with the Fire and Rescue Service to ensure good lines of communication and operational familiarity.

#### **4.9 Monitoring Performance**

- a. Performance will be managed and monitored using clearly defined and measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The following KPIs will be reported:
  - % of buildings with a valid fire safety checks renewed within it due date
  - Total no of outstanding and overdue remedial actions
  - % buildings with outstanding and overdue remedial actions
  - % of buildings with fire safety systems/equipment present where all systems/equipment has been tested/maintained in accordance with this policy
  - Number of notices received from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services in the reporting period
  - Number of outstanding notices received from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Services
- b. Commentary will be provided for any overdue requirements to include the date they became overdue, days overdue, and proposed action to bring them back into a compliant position.
- c. To provide additional context commentary will also include information on the proportion of activities within the reporting period that were undertaken before and after their due date.
- d. A detailed PI suite will be defined within the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- e. The following assurance activity will be undertaken and reported in line with the Fire Safety Management Plan
  - Internal audit
  - Strategic review
  - 3rd Party Assurance

#### **4.11 Scheme of Delegation**

- a. **The Duty Holder** and responsible authority for approving this policy is the **Weslo HM Board of Directors**.
- b. **The Operations Director** is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this policy.
- c. **The Responsible Person** for formulating this policy, reviewing and monitoring its implementation and managing performance against this policy is the **Technical Manager**.

#### **4 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

This Policy will always be carried out in accordance with WHM's Policy of Equality & Diversity which aims to promote diversity, fairness, social justice and equality of opportunity by adopting and promoting fair policies and procedures.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and actions identified are incorporated into the Fire Safety Management Plan.

#### **5 PUBLICISING AND AVAILABILITY**

This policy is available on the WHM website, to Board and staff members and any other key stakeholders. Copies are available free of charge. A summary of this policy can be made available in other formats and languages on request.

#### **6 MONITORING & REPORTING**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with applicable legislative changes, changes within the organisation and best practice.

#### **7 COMPLAINTS**

Anyone wishing to make a **formal** complaint about the services provided by the organisation should do so using our Complaint Procedure.

Further information on how to make a complaint can be found at:

<https://www.weslo-housing.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Make-a-Complaint.pdf>

#### **8 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

This Policy relates to:

- a. The Landlord Compliance Strategy and;
- b. The Fire Safety Management Plan

The above must be read in conjunction with this Policy.