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Policy Name	Fire Safety Policy
Policy Author	Deputy Director
Approved by Sub Committee	N/A
Approved by Management Committee	January 2023
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West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in larger print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages. Please contact the office.



Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator No. 203
Registered Charity No. SCO38737, VAT Registration No. 180223636
Registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Aim and Objectives

The Fire Safety Policy aim is to ensure that the Co-operative effectively administers compliance with its landlord obligations in relation to fire safety and fire risk assessments in the common areas of flatted domestic premises.

Policy objectives include:

- taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure fire safety within common areas of flatted domestic premises;
- maintaining WWHC's housing stock in accordance with the relevant and applicable legal requirements;
- ensuring that systems are in place to enable compliance with the required landlord duties in relation to fire safety and fire risk assessments in the common areas of flatted domestic premises;
- procuring appropriately qualified consultants to carry out fire risk assessments in line with legislative / regulatory requirements; and
- Collecting and using asset management data in relation to fire safety of WWHC's stock to make informed financial decisions on maintaining the stock.

1.2 Expected Outcomes

Key outcomes of operating an effective Fire Safety Policy include:

- ensuring that properties are well maintained, safe, secure and in line with the SHQS;
- providing compliance assurance in relation to fire safety and fire risk assessments in the common areas of flatted domestic premises; and
- Delivering value for money.

1.3 Informing and Involving Stakeholders

WWHC considers Fire Safety matters under 3 main headings:

- Technical
- Operational
- Communications

We will promote our Fire Safety Policy through our newsletter, website and Tenant's handbook. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult with the Management Committee and tenant members in line with WWHC's policies.

1.4 Legislation and Best Practice

WWHC will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations, including:

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974;
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005;
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006;
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015;
- Building Regulations / Technical Standards; and
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- British Standard BS5839-6:2019(+A1:2020);
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016 (Note that the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 were revoked on 8 December 2016 but continue to apply to relevant products placed on the market prior to this date);
- The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989, 1993 and 2010);
- 'Practical fire safety – existing high rise domestic buildings: guidance – updated March 2021';
- BS 5499 and the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.
- BS 9991:2015 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings. Code of practice
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019
- Non automatic fire-fighting systems in buildings. Code of practice BS 9990:2015

1.5 Responsible Person and Duty Holder

WWHC's Director is the Duty Holder and has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Fire Safety Policy. The named Duty Holder is Stephanie Marshall. The Deputy Director is the Responsible Person for key aspects of the day to day fire safety duties with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.

For office and CRC premises, the Director has overall responsibility for Fire Safety matters. For the office premises, the Assistant Director (Corporate Services) and Concierge Manager are the Responsible Persons for key aspects of the day to day health and safety matters, including fire safety, with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff. The Centre Manager is the Responsible Person for the CRC and has day to day responsibility for the CRC.

Management Committee will receive regular updates on the implementation of the Fire Safety Policy and any Fire Safety Reviews so that they can have assurance that it is operating effectively.

1.6 Equalities

We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in our work. In implementing this Policy, we will provide a fair and equal service to all people, irrespective of factors such as gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.

2. Key Principles – Fire Safety Policy

2.1 Context

Fire is a potential risk for any property and the assessed level of risk and mitigation measures are considered within our risk register. It is significantly important that WWHC comply with any statutory or regulatory requirements in relation to fire safety for all the Co-operatives assets, including common areas of flatted domestic accommodation, and provide assurance that we have robust processes in place.

2.2 Funding

2.2.1 WWHC will allocate sufficient resources from within its budgets to manage fire safety and fire risk assessments.

2.3 Common areas

2.3.1 It is our regulatory duty to ensure that we maintain facilities such as equipment and devices for the use by or protection of fire fighters – this includes emergency lighting and dry risers.

2.3.2 The Co-operative will adopt a zero tolerance approach to belongings in communal areas and will not permit any items to be stored in communal areas including in landings, stairwells, and corridors.

2.4 Emergency lighting

2.4.1 Annual testing will be carried out to all emergency lightning to make sure that the batteries are run down for 3 hours and then will accept a recharge. A monthly maintenance check will also be carried out to ensure that all emergency lighting and batteries etc. are functional.

2.5 Smoke and Heat detectors

2.5.1 The Scottish Government has confirmed new fire and smoke alarm standard applies from February 2022. This is introduced through the implementation of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard)(Extension of Criterion) Order 2019. The change applies to all households in Scotland and must be met by February 2022. The new Scottish legislation states that an interlinked Fire and Smoke alarm system must be fitted to the Co-operative's 644 properties.

Alarm requirements under the new regulations:

- one smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes
- one smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings
- one heat alarm installed in every kitchen
- all alarms should be ceiling mounted
- all alarms should be interlinked

There is also a requirement for carbon monoxide detector to be fitted where there is a carbon fuelled appliance or a flue (reference - Scottish Government, April 2018).

At the time of writing the review of this policy, the Co-operative has brought 621 of its 644 properties up to the amended Tolerable Standard for smoke and heat detection. Due to Covid-19, access to the last few remaining properties has been difficult and a plan is in place to access these properties.

2.5.2 In WWHC's MSF blocks, the smoke alarms in all properties are linked to the concierge station via the GDX door entry system. Concierge are alerted to all smoke alarm activations, including false alarms from each specific flat location. Concierge will immediately call the tenant via the controlled entry system as soon as an alarm activation is received to confirm all is ok with the tenant. In the event that the Concierge check call is not answered, a 999 call is made and the MSF procedures are implemented.

All alarms are checked annually to ensure that the system functions properly and is in good working order.

2.6 MSF Dry risers

These will be checked every 6 months by an appointed specialist to make sure that the system functions properly and is in good working order. The checks include an annual pressure test in accordance with BSEN 9990 2015.

2.7 MSF Lifts

WWHC has 2 lifts in each tower which are split level, each lift serving odd and even floors. Each lift has a 'fire service control' function. However, it should be noted that WWHC's lift are not defined as firefighting lifts.

2.8 Signage

Where required, fire action signs will be placed in landings, doors and common areas. Where fire safety signs are provided they will be in accordance with BS 5499 and the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

2.9 Contractors

2.9.1 WWHC operates a works order number system. Any contractor entering a WWHC, block, flat or house will be provided with a specific job order for those works and any required information in relation to fire safety matters where required.

2.9.2 Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS)

Generic Risk Assessments have been carried provide from our contractors for day-to-day tasks. For more complex or specialists works, specific RAMS and pre-construction will be required prior to works commencing.

2.9.3 Hot Works / Hot Works Permit

Hot works is generally prohibited within WWHC's blocks. Any new specified pipework or repairs to pipework is done in push or crimp fitting where there is no requirement for soldering works.

In exceptional circumstances where there is no alternative and hot works cannot be avoided, WWHC will issue a hot works permit which must be completed before and after the works along with a site specific RAMS for the works.

2.10 Doors

2.10.1 Common Area Doors

Within WWHC's flatted properties, all front entrance doors, sub landing doors and escape stair doors have a minimum 30 minute rating. These doors will be subject to routine checks and repairs as required.

WWHC has noted recent Scottish Government guidance in relation to 60 minute door sets and these will be installed as part future planned replacements works.

2.10.2 Flat internal doors

Within WWHC's flatted properties, all living room doors have a minimum 30 minute fire rating and are fitted with self-closing hinges.

During any void property inspections, WWHC will confirm (+ record) this door is in place. Where this is found not to be the case void work instructed will include supply and fit a replacement 30 minute fire rated door.

In circumstances where a let property is identified as not having an adequate internal fire door, the current tenant will be asked to confirm they have written approval to have altered the internal fire door between living room and hall. In any cases where approval has not been granted, the current tenant will require to replace the door with an adequate internal fire door approved by WWHC. WWHC will also offer to do the work on a rechargeable repair basis.

Where there is dubiety as to whether or not the current tenant changed the internal fire door between the living room and the hall WWHC will replace the internal fire door to the required standard.

2.11 Planned Inspections / Fire Risk Assessments

2.11.1 Joint Quarterly Inspections

WWHC carries out routine quarterly inspections jointly with Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Any technical defects or other non-compliance issues such as bulk refuse on landings are actioned timeously.

2.11.2 Fire Risk Assessments (FRA)

WWHC will appoint a suitably qualified consultant to carry out a PAS 79 compliant FRA review every 3 years or sooner if required by any major building alterations, statutory, regulatory or best practice requirements.

Improvement actions identified by the fire safety risk assessments will be prioritised as an Action Plan and will either be dealt with immediately or added to the planned maintenance plans, depending on the urgency of the action.

2.12 Fire safety home checks

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service provide free home checks – information on how to access this service will be provided to new tenants in their tenant pack. Tenants will be encouraged to take advantage of the free home check once they have settled in to their new home and as part of regular newsletter updates for existing tenants.

3.1 Procedures in the event of a fire

3.1.1 Stay put procedures / definition

In line with current housing sector guidance for flatted properties, WWHC has a 'stay put policy' in the event of a fire, defined as follows:

'Strategy normally adopted in blocks of flats and maisonettes, whereby, when a fire occurs in a flat or maisonette, the occupants of that dwelling evacuate, but occupants of all other dwellings can safely remain in their dwellings unless directly affected by heat and smoke or directed to leave by the fire and rescue service' (Source: BS 9991)

3.1.2 Concierge procedures in the event of a fire (MSF's only)

In the event of a fire within the MSF's, WWHC's Concierge Team will release the automatic door systems providing the Scottish Fire and Rescue service immediate access to the blocks and dry riser facilities.

Concierge will also activate the 'fire service control' function on the lifts for the arrival of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

4 Policy Monitor & Review

4.1 We will review the Fire Safety Policy every three years or sooner if required by statutory, regulatory or best practice requirements.

Policy Implementation Checklist

Equality and Diversity Compliant	Yes
Equality Impact Assessment required	No
Data Protection (GDPR) compliant	Yes
Health & Safety compliant	Yes
Training requirements	Ongoing Fire Safety awareness refresher training for all staff.
Regulatory Framework Assurance Information Bank Updated	AN3
Policy Implementation	
Reporting arrangements Performance, Assurance and Risk Sub Committee	Compliance Update Report Quarterly
Policy register updated	Following Committee Approval
Published on Website	Following Committee Approval
Publicity material issued	N/A
Related Policies	Asset Management Strategy Electrical Safety Policy Maintenance Policy External Audit Risk Management Business Plan Annual Assurance Statement