



Fire Safety Management Policy

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Approved by:	Group Board
Drafted by:	Diane Burrell – Facilities Manager
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1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Wythenshawe Community Housing Groups (WCHG) primary aim is to provide homes which are safe, secure, comfortable and well maintained.
- 1.2 The aim of this document is to set out a definitive set of Policy commitments for the management of fire safety in any properties or premises owned or managed by WCHG.
- 1.3 The policy outlines roles and responsibilities for the management of fire safety with a focus on good housekeeping and fire prevention, as a proactive method of reducing emergencies and the damage caused by them.
- 1.4 The policy has been developed to ensure WCHG complies with the requirements of The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 1.5 This Policy fits within a broader commitment to the general management of health and safety as set out in the WCHG Health and Safety Policy.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The aim of this Policy is to introduce a structured Procedure and reporting schedule for the management of Fire Safety within commercial and domestic communal areas in accordance with the LGA guidance document Fire Safety in Purpose Built Blocks of Flats (2012). Office and commercial premises will be managed in accordance with fire safety Risk Assessment HM government guidance 'Offices & Shops' (June 2006).
- 2.2 WCHG has a responsibility under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to take all reasonable precautions to prevent the risk of exposure to fire to Tenants, Leaseholders, employees and other persons working at or accessing its premises.
- 2.3 WCHG has specific 'Stay safe' policies for all high rise (over 18m) and Sheltered Schemes. All Tenants/Leaseholders at these locations have been advised of this policy and this information is provided within the New Tenancy Pack to all new Tenants/Leaseholders.
- 2.4 WCHG also has a 'Stay Safe' policy for all other multi-occupancy premises (under 18m) managed by WCHG. All Tenants/Leaseholders at these locations have been advised of this policy and this information is provided within the New Tenancy Pack to all new Tenants/Leaseholders.
- 2.5 WCHG will put in place the following actions to ensure the communal areas within all properties or premises owned or managed by WCHG are effectively managed:

- 2.5.1 Appoint an external accredited, independent and suitably qualified Fire Risk Assessor competent of undertaking WCHG's Fire Risk Assessments,
- 2.5.2 Undertake type 3 or type 4 Fire Risk Assessments, the suitability of which will be determined in liaison with the Fire Safety Consultant,
- 2.5.3 Ensure Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken at pre-determined timescales as advised by our Fire Consultant, or if there is a reason to suspect they are no longer valid or there has been a significant change to the building or safety systems and associated fire risks, identify and assess sources of risk and mitigation/control measures,
- 2.5.4 Implement and manage the delivery and compliance of any reasonable recommendations identified,
- 2.5.5 Keep records of the recommendations identified and the remedial works implemented with a clear audit trail to evidence compliance and delivery,
- 2.5.6 Ensure resources are reviewed and made available annually to address the findings and recommendations from all Fire Risk Assessments,
- 2.5.7 A Servicing and Maintenance Programme for all fire safety prevention and protection equipment is in place,
- 2.5.8 Monitor and manage the performance of the nominated Contractors who deliver the Servicing and Maintenance on behalf of WCHG,
- 2.5.9 Hold regular Contract meetings to manage the Contractor's performance with regards to Fire Safety and compliance,
- 2.5.10 Ensure Contractors utilised by WCHG reinstate ALL fire stopping including labelling and certification upon completion of repair, maintenance and improvement works, where it has been affected by works (as in 4.5.2),
- 2.5.11 Continuously review our fire prevention methods and ensure best practice through partnership working is always considered as standard,
- 2.5.12 Commission & carry out annual compartmentation surveys to high rise buildings, Extra Care Schemes, Supported Housing Schemes and Sheltered Housing Schemes for audit purposes and ensure appropriate labels on remedial works in place,
- 2.5.13 Include improvements to fire safety as part of WCHG's Investment/Renewals Programme,

- 2.5.14 Inform and liaise with Tenants and Leaseholders to ensure fire risk is minimised and building users are effectively communicated with,
- 2.5.15 Ensure Tenant/Leaseholder alterations are approved under the 'Tenant Alterations Procedure'. The procedure has been designed to ensure that any breach of compartmentation is addressed prior to works being approved at the post inspection stage,
- 2.5.16 Regular checks are undertaken to ensure a sterile common area is adopted and enforced,
- 2.5.17 Ensure annual fire entrance door compliance checks are undertaken and recorded and any fire safety risks identified within dwellings are raised with the tenants during the annual H&S inspections to all relevant domestic properties. Ensure any repairs and undertaken within reasonable timescales. Communal fire door inspections will also be undertaken and records maintained and general fire safety advice will be provided to tenants to promote fire safety in homes,
- 2.5.18 Ensure, in the event of a fire related incident, the guidelines for The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) are adhered to,
- 2.5.19 Ensure that WCHG's Critical Incident Report and Escalation Procedure is enacted in the event of an outbreak of fire and records of such incidents maintained for reporting purposes.
- 2.5.20 Ensure performance in relation to Fire Safety is reported to the Tenant Committee and Board on a monthly basis by inclusion within the Monthly Corporate Performance Pack.

3.0 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 3.1 Ensure all employees are adequately briefed on Fire Safety Management and are fully aware of their role in minimising and preventing the risk of fire.
- 3.2 Maintain robust Fire Risk Assessments and action plans on all domestic (communal) and commercial properties.
- 3.3 Ensure all fire safety precautions, both Passive and Active, are rigorously managed and monitored.

- 3.4 Ensure all housing property is maintained to best practice standards to minimise the risk of fire.
- 3.5 Ensure that residents are fully aware of their responsibilities under the Tenancy Agreement or Lease and how they can access fire safety advice.
- 3.6 Engage and participate with the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service in respect of fire safety improvements and Greater Manchester combined Registered Providers on sharing best practice and raising standards.
- 3.7 Ensure the approved report 'Fire Safety Advice in High and Low Rise Blocks' is managed in a robust manner and reporting mechanisms of potential risks and agreed actions are adhered to.
- 3.8 Ensure the "Management of Mobility Scooters Policy" is managed in a robust manner and reporting mechanisms of potential risks and agreed actions are adhered to.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Board and Chief Executive

- 4.1.1 Ultimately the Board holds overall responsibility for the safety of all of the organisation's customers, employees and appointed contractors living or working in properties owned or managed by WCHG.
- 4.1.2 The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board for ensuring that WCHG operates safely and complies with all statutory, legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 4.1.3 As part of the responsibilities detailed in this document the Chief Executive and Directors will ensure compliance by:
 - Reviewing and agreeing the Policies and Procedures to be implemented by WCHG.
 - Ensuring the staffing structure is adequately resourced with competent persons nominated to oversee and manage all preventative works associated with the management of fire safety in WCHG premises.
 - Ensuring sufficient financial and staffing resources are available to enable those procedures to be implemented and maintained.

4.2 The Director of Assets

4.2.1 The Director of Assets along with others identified in this Policy are designated as 'Responsible Deputies' and ensure the delivery of this policy.

4.3 **The Senior Contract Manager (Voids & Facilities)**

4.3.1 Under the current organisational structure, the Senior Contract Manager has management responsibility for the Facilities Team. The Facilities team is responsible for the day to day management of the fire safety prevention and protection equipment and as such the Senior Contract Manager is designated as the 'Responsible Officer' under this policy.

4.3.2 The Senior Contract Manager will ensure that any person(s) undertaking Fire Risk Assessments and Servicing/Maintenance/Testing of the fire prevention and protection equipment are deemed competent to minimise the potential risk of fire in premises owned or managed by the Organisation.

4.3.3 The Competent Person(s) does not need to be a direct employee of WCHG however the senior manager must ensure the competency of any external persons, contractors or consultants appointed to this role.

4.3.4 Any specialist contractor or consultant must be UKAS accredited and must provide evidence as to the competency of any employee they allocate to work on WCHG's behalf.

4.3.5 It is the Senior Contract Manager responsibility to develop and maintain a register of these operatives and their competency.

4.4 **The Facilities Manager**

4.4.1 The Facilities Manager will ensure that all fire safety systems and equipment is Inspected/Serviced to ensure they are operating effectively, within the timescales set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and other relevant guidance on the maintenance of safety equipment.

4.4.2 The Facilities Manager will ensure that a robust system is in place to report, manage and monitor the FRA recommendations ensuring all reasonable FRA recommendations are allocated to senior managers and addressed through to completion in a timely manner.

4.5 **Senior Managers (Property)**

4.5.1 Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring all WCHG Technicians receive adequate information, instruction and training in relation to fire safety and to ensure they maintain knowledge and skills.

4.5.2 Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring all Contractors are adequately trained/competent in relation to fire safety to ensure the

working methods adopted by them do not compromise safety and the subsequent reputation of WCHG and to ensure they maintain knowledge and skills.

4.5.3 Senior Managers are responsible for monitoring the performance of their subordinates and Contractors against this Policy and standard contractor terms and conditions of engagement.

4.5.4 Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring that the process for Tenant alteration request, completion and post inspection is followed closely and in line with the constraints of this document. Further details can be found in the Group's Tenants Alterations Procedure.

4.6 Health and Safety Manager

4.6.1 The Health and Safety Manager is responsible for the management of the training and development of the Fire Wardens. They will ensure that all employees with fire safety duties are appropriately trained and supported and associated training records are maintained.

4.6.2 The Health and Safety Manager is responsible for the management of Fire Evacuation Drills at our commercial buildings, including Community Centres/Rooms.

4.6.1 The Health and Safety Manager is responsible for the Fire Safety training of Employees, including new employees to the business. Associated training records will be maintained. All staff are required to complete fire safety awareness training, which is a module available on the WorkRite e-learning system. Training completion rates are monitored via a KPI by the Health and Safety Department. Further specific fire safety training is arranged and completed by job role.

4.7 Senior Housing Managers

4.7.1 Senior Housing Managers are responsible for the management and coordination of the residents of multi-occupancy domestic buildings following an evacuation by the Emergency Services as a result of a fire.

4.7.2 Senior Housing Managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate Housing advice is provided and that welfare checks are undertaken regularly to premises of multi occupancy in line with WCHG Stay Safe Policy. The mobility and vulnerability of residents will be reviewed prior to letting and residents will be required to inform the Group of any changes to their circumstances on an ongoing basis.

4.7.3 Senior Housing Managers are responsible for ensuring the Group's Communal Areas are managed effectively as detailed within the approved GLT Report, namely 'Fire Safety Advice in High and Low Rise Blocks' to ensure the risk of fire is removed.

4.7.4 Senior Housing Managers in partnership with Senior Property Managers are responsible for ensuring the Group's Management of Mobility Scooters Policy is managed effectively to ensure the risk of fire or a cause of obstruction in the event of a fire by this apparatus is minimised.

4.7.5 **Communication to Customers**

As part of the Fire Safety Policy WCHG will:

- Ensure information about fire safety, including prevention and protection measures, is available to residents in low rise and high rise blocks, Extra Care Schemes, Sheltered Accommodation and building users via leaflets and signage.
- Ensure tenants and residents are aware of the fire safety management procedures for their homes and block.
- Ensure up to date information on fire safety is available on our website.

4.7.6 **Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**

Where appropriate a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be carried out for tenants and residents with a disability, mobility issues or physical and mental wellbeing needs within the following property types:

- Extra Care Scheme
- Sheltered Accommodation

The PEEP will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Scheme Manager and the PEEP will be kept on a central log held securely on site and made available to the Fire Service in the event of an evacuation.

The PEEP will consider individuals on a case by case basis and will take into account a person's ability to evacuate or understand their responsibility and their capacity in the event of an evacuation.

4.8 **Development Managers**

4.8.1 Development managers will ensure all new build schemes and acquired stock, fully comply with regulatory and legislative requirements prior to formal handover or occupancy. This will include the provision of all appropriate documentation/certification at the point of handover. A fully compliant fire risk assessment and compartmentation certificate to blocks of multi-occupancy must be in place.

4.9 **Employees**

- 4.9.1 All employees have a responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others, including members of the public, residents, visitors and Contractors in the event of a fire.
- 4.9.2 All employees have a responsibility to inform WCHG of any work situations which may pose a danger of fire.
- 4.9.3 All employees have a responsibility to report hazards that may present a serious risk of fire or compromise the integrity of an area of compartmentation.
- 4.9.4 All employees must complete mandatory health and safety training.

5.0 AUDIT

- 5.1 On a bi-monthly basis the Facilities Manager will ensure that a percentage of the Contractor's paperwork will be audited to ensure compliance. The purpose of this audit is to:
 - 5.1.1 Confirm the Maintenance Plan is being carried out in accordance with the agreed timescales.
 - 5.1.2 In the event of any changes in Legislation, ensure that the Maintenance Plan is amended to incorporate these changes.
 - 5.1.3 Confirm that any identified works have been actioned or a reasonable timeframe for action has been set.
 - 5.1.4 Confirm that the Electronic System (Promaster) is being updated to reflect the completion of Inspections/Assessments/Serviceing.

6.0 FIRE OUTBREAK/EVACUATION PROCEDURE

- 6.1 In the event of a fire outbreak at any premises owned or managed by WCHG a plan of action stating how to respond, has been developed.
- 6.2 All colleagues are trained on what to do in case of a fire outbreak as part of the induction process. Details of this can be found within the Generic Emergency Evacuation Procedure.
- 6.3 The procedure in the event of a fire outbreak within a multi storey block can be found within the WCHG Emergency Evacuation Procedure – Multi Storey Blocks
- 6.4 WCHG's Critical Incident Reporting and Escalation Procedure will be invoked in such circumstances.
- 6.5 Reporting procedures (RIDDOR) will be adhered to as outlined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

7.0 REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

- 7.1 WCHG will ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy represent a robust approach to the management of fire safety.
- 7.2 A bi-annual review of this policy and associated arrangements, procurements and processes will take place and WCHG will continually look at ways to further strengthen and improve our approach.
- 7.3 WCHG will ensure that sufficient financial resources are in place as part of the annual budgeting process to deliver the Fire Safety Management Policy and Procedures.
- 7.4 The Senior Contract Manager (Voids), supported by the Health and Safety Manager, will track the Regulations and incorporate any changes that may become necessary.
- 7.5 Any changes made will be incorporated into future versions of this Policy and will be approved under the WCHG formal approval and governance process by Group Leadership Team, Tenant Committee and Board.
- 7.6 The Senior Surveyor will ensure any fires in WCHG stock will be adequately recorded in WCHG's systems for regular monitoring and service development purposes.
- 7.7 As a matter of course this Policy will be subject to formal review prior to the anniversary of the review date.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 WCHG is committed to the effective operation of this Fire Safety Management Policy and Procedures across the whole of the Group. WCHG will ensure that adequate resources are made available to implement appropriately. Responsibilities will be effectively delegated to key personnel that are sufficiently skilled and trained so as to competently manage the operational demands placed upon them. WCHG believes the implementation of the Fire Safety Management Policy and Procedures will contribute directly to ensuring the well-being of the customers and employees of the Group.

9.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Health and Safety Policy
Asset Management Strategy
Critical Incident Report and Escalation Policy

Approved GLT Report 'Fire Safety Advice in High and Low Rise Blocks'
Management of Communal Areas Policy
Management of Mobility Scooters Policy
Stay Safe Policy
WCHG Emergency Evacuation Procedure - Multi Storey Blocks
Generic Emergency Evacuation Procedure
Tenant Alterations Procedure