

POLICY

FIRE SAFETY

**in Housing Stock, The Hub and
Common Areas**

Wellhouse - The Place to Be

Policy Created	July 2022	Reviewed August 2023
Date of Next Review	August 2026	

The policy is available on the Association's website. Customers will be provided with a copy of this policy on request. We will provide this policy in specific formats as requested, i.e., tape, Braille or another language.

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Linked Policies/Procedures

1.	Openness and Confidentiality
2.	Customer Engagement and Participation policy
3.	Complaints Policy
4.	Equality and Diversity & Human Rights Policy
5.	Void Policy
6.	Repairs and Maintenance
7.	Asset Management Strategy
8.	Electrical Safety

1. Vision and values

Wellhouse – the Place to Be.

This simple statement is our vision of Wellhouse as an attractive place where people feel happy and safe, benefit from having a good home and an attractive environment and feel proud to be part of a vibrant community.

We believe that our values of **Trust, Honesty, Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Sustainability** supported by a comprehensive policy framework will help make our vision a reality.

2. Governance

Wellhouse HA is a community controlled Registered Social Landlord and is managed by a group of local people who are elected onto the Management Committee. We may co-opt other people onto the Management Committee from time to time where we feel we need specialist support. Their role is to make sure that the Association is well run, meets the needs of the local area and is responsive to what is important to local people.

The Management Committee appoints senior staff, agrees all the Association's policies and takes all the key decisions. The Director and the senior team support the Committee in these responsibilities.

3. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a robust fire safety framework which can be implemented to secure the safety and wellbeing of tenants, visitors, contractors and firefighters. 1.2 The procedures detailed within this section are intended to facilitate the effective management of fire safety, ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to comply with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, as amended and all other relevant legislation.

4. Equal Opportunities and Human Rights Statement

We aim to ensure that all services, including the delivery of this policy, provide equality of opportunity.

We will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals. We will not discriminate against any individual for any reason, including age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or other status.

5. Definitions

Common Area – “A common area is a portion of a property that is shared and used by multiple residents. This would include areas such as the lobby, stairway, drying area and hallway.”

Compartmentation – “subdivision of a building by fire-resisting walls and/or floors for the purpose of limiting fire spread within the building.”

Competent Person – “person, suitably trained and qualified by knowledge and practical experience, and provided with the necessary instructions, to enable the required task(s) to be carried out correctly.”

Dwelling – “a house, flat, or other place of residence.”

Emergency Lighting – “lighting provided for use when the supply to normal lighting fails.”

Fire Door – “door or shutter provided for the passage of people, air or objects which, together with its frame and furniture as installed in a building, is intended (when closed) to resist the passage of fire and/or gaseous products of combustion and is capable of meeting specified performance criteria to those ends.”

Smoke Alarm – “device containing, within one housing, all the components, necessary for detecting smoke and for giving an audible alarm.”

HMO – “a house, premises or a group of premises with shared amenities, occupied by three or more persons from three or more families as their only or main residence.”

6. References (see also Section 8.6 -Topic Specific Guidance)

- British Standard BS5839-6:2019 (+A1:2020)
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Domestic Technical Handbook (as revised)
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 • Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, as amended
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989, 1993 and 2010).
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Practical fire safety for existing specialised housing and similar premises: guidance 2020

7. Fire and Smoke alarms

7.1 The Organisation will currently provide :

- one functioning smoke alarm in every circulation space, such as hallways and landings; and
- one heat alarm in every kitchen where kitchen and rewire works take place, and in all new housing.

7.2 All alarms will be interlinked, mains powered, and provided with an integral stand-by power supply (a minimum of class D).

7.3 Fire Detection will be upgraded in all properties to meet LD2 compliance.

The organisation will provide in all tenancies from this date:

- 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
- These will be either hardwired or 10 year tamper-proof sealed battery units. All alarms must be interlinked and ceiling mounted.

7.4 The Organisation will ensure that fire and smoke alarms are in proper working order at the start of each tenancy.

7.5 The Organisation will ensure that all alarms are installed in accordance with the recommendations contained in BS5839 Part 6.

7.6 Where an OT assessment has taken place specialised alarms will be given to tenants who have a disability, an impairment or special needs (e.g., smoke alarms with a vibrating pad, flashing light etc.)

7.7 Tenants will be advised to test alarms on a weekly basis.

8. Carbon Monoxide Alarms

8.1 Carbon monoxide alarms will be installed in any room containing a fossil fuel burning appliance.

9. Emergency Lighting

9.1 Emergency lighting will be present in all common escape routes within the Hub and HMO.

9.2 The emergency lighting system will be designed to automatically illuminate upon the failure of the power supply.

9.3 The emergency lighting system will be tested on a monthly basis by a member of staff with a record of the test maintained for 3 years (HMO 14 Langbar Gds to retain their own and carry out testing).

9.4 a competent person will perform an annual discharge test. This will involve simulating a power failure and conducting a test of the full rated duration of the emergency lights (e.g., 3 hours).

10. Fire Doors and Compartmentation

10.1 The Hub & HMO is to be split into fire-resisting compartments by fire testing doors, walls and floors which will provide a physical barrier to fire.

11. Scottish Housing Charter

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter came into force in April 2012. The Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that Registered Social Landlords should achieve.

Outcome 1: Equalities

- Every tenant and other customer have their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services

Outcome 2: Communication

- Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides

Outcome 3: Quality of housing

- Tenant's homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair

Outcome 4: Repairs, maintenance and improvements

- Tenant's homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and customers are given reasonable choices about when work is done

Outcome 7: Value for money

- Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay

12. Smoke ventilation and compartmentalisation

12.1 The Hub ventilation will be checked weekly along with the fire test

12.2 New build properties are built with smoke ventilation systems as required by relevant building regulations.

12.3 No smoke ventilation systems are installed in other properties. There is no requirement or programme to retrofit ventilation systems in older housing stock.

13. Fire Equipment

13.1 Fire extinguishers will not be installed in dwellings as tenants will not be trained on the safe use of extinguishers. Accidents can occur if tenants try to use them in the event of a fire or if they are discharged through malice or horseplay. Fire extinguishers are provided in the Hub and switch/boiler rooms.

13.2 All fire safety equipment in common areas, including emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, are covered by a maintenance and inspection contract which details the frequency of reinspection of the equipment, as follows:

- Emergency lighting annual
- Fire alarm systems 6 monthly
- Fire extinguishers annual

14. Evacuation Policy

14.1 Generic information about fire safety in flats is provided to new tenants in tenancy start-up packs which will be issued to all tenants at the start of a tenancy.

14.2 WHA office has its own Policy as does the Café, Nursery and HMO its is each individual organisations responsibility to ensure their own policy is implemented.

15. Signage (office)

15.1 Fire action signs will be placed in corridors (on every level), entrance 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.

16. Maintenance and Repairs

16.1 The Organisation will ensure premises, equipment and devices provided for fire safety are subject to a suitable system of maintenance, are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

16.2 All repairs will be carried out within the timescale set in the Organisation's repair policy by a competent person.

17. Access and Facilities for the Fire Service

17.1 The Organisation will ensure:

- there is sufficient means of external access to enable fire appliances to be brought near to the building for effective use;
- there is sufficient means of access into, and within, the building for firefighting personnel to effect search and rescue and fight fire; and that
- where appropriate, the building is provided with sufficient internal fire mains and other facilities to assist firefighters in their tasks.

18. Fire Risk Assessment

18.1 The Organisation will carry out generic risk assessments of other common areas in flatted properties and implement action plans arising from these.

19. Tenant Responsibilities

19.1 The Organisation will issue fire safety information leaflets to new tenants and include annual newsletter features to remind tenants to:

- test smoke alarms on a weekly basis;
- ensure all communal areas are not obstructed;
- ensure fire doors are not replaced by doors not meeting the required fire rating standard and
- ensure fire doors are not propped open or otherwise disabled.

20. Commercial premises

20.1 Within commercial premises owned but not managed by the Association , the responsibility for the completion of the fire risk assessment will fall upon the tenant. Both the tenant and the Organisation will hold a copy of the completed fire risk assessment.

21. Roles and Responsibilities

21.1 Director

The Director, being the most senior level of executive control within the organisation, will hold ultimate accountability and responsibility for the development and implementation of this policy.

21.2 Assets & Maintenance Manager

The Association's Assets & Maintenance Manager will be responsible for the practical delivery and implementation of this policy and for identifying amendments / areas of improvement. All such suggested amendments will be escalated to the Director of Operations without undue delay.

The Assets & Maintenance Manager will take all reasonable steps to deal with fire incidents and emergencies, uncontrolled risks and required actions brought to their attention.

The Assets & Maintenance Manager will lead on the investigation of fire incidents, in conjunction with appropriate colleagues from Housing, where relevant. Where appropriate, ensuring the correct reporting of incident under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

The Assets & Maintenance Manager along with the Maintenance Officer will be responsible for the day to day management and implementation of this policy and will be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining an effective regime of fire safety / prevention inspection and monitoring in the Association's housing stock and common areas
- Contract management of the appointed fire safety and inspection contractor(s)
- Assets & Maintenance Manager along with the Maintenance Officer to review and update the policy and procedures as necessary and update on their effectiveness to the senior management team as required
- Providing relevant information to interested parties, including enforcement authorities on fire safety, as required
- Reporting any incident of fire to the Director and SMT
- Monitoring that all relevant staff are aware of their responsibilities under this policy
- Ensuring appropriate record-keeping of all inspection records for the timescales as noted in this policy

21.3 Asset Manager The Asset Manager will be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining a register of fire safety installations across WHA stock, including, emergency lighting, fire alarms.
- Ensuring that the register is updated on completion of any relevant works to fire safety installations and equipment
- Identifying, programming and procuring major fire safety equipment and works and training.

22. All other staff

- 22.1 Housing Officers Carrying out regular inspection of blocks and common closes for the build-up of potential fire hazards, aiming to do this monthly. It is the responsibility of Housing Officers to take immediate steps to address fire safety issues in communal areas where these are a result of customers' actions which create a fire hazard.
- 22.2 Where Housing Officers identify areas of concern relating to fire safety within the fabric of a building, this should be raised immediately to the Housing Manager.
- 22.3 Maintenance Officer identify areas of concern relating to fire safety within the fabric of a building, this should be notified immediately to the Assets & Maintenance Manager and appropriate actions / repairs instructed

23. Review timeframe

The policy will be reviewed in one year and every three years thereafter, or sooner, in response to a change in legislation or circumstance.

24. General Data Protection Regulations

The organisation will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own GDPR Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in Wellhouse HA's privacy notice.