



**City of London Corporation  
Department of Community & Children's Services  
Housing Division**

**FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

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## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Housing Division's approach to fire safety to ensure that the service offered is compliant, efficient, responsive, and consistent service representing value for money.
- 1.2 The policy outlines our commitment to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents by setting clear standards for fire prevention, preparedness, and response.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The policy applies only to housing stock owned or managed by the City Corporation's Housing Service as part of the Housing Revenue Account. This includes the City of London's social housing estates and the City of London and Gresham Almshouses.
- 2.2 This policy does not apply to single access properties i.e. buildings or structures that have only one means of access or exit and do not require a fire risk assessment under the current legislation.

## **3. Aims and objectives**

- 3.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure that properties we manage meet the relevant fire legislation and that residents' homes are safe.
- 3.2 We will provide an efficient system of assessing risks and taking action to address any risks that are identified.
- 3.3 We will ensure that we meet our fire safety responsibilities for our residents and keep them informed of the fire protection measures in their buildings and our management actions relating to fire safety.
- 3.4 We will ensure that we meet our fire responsibilities for Leaseholders by keeping them informed of necessary communal fire safety management actions to their blocks.
- 3.5 We will ensure that there are effective systems in place to monitor and maintain fire safety management within our buildings.
- 3.6 We will have a process to identify our most vulnerable residents and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support on fire safety risks, and action in the event of an emergency.

## **4. Service standards**

- 4.1 We will update our current Fire Risk Assessments (FRA's) on a three-year basis or following major reconfiguration works or based upon an FRA assessors' risk assessment for all properties that share common areas.

4.2 We will undertake management inspections relating to fire and fire detection systems on a routine basis.

4.3 We will complete all fire actions that result from our routine visits within an agreed timescale based upon risk and will be contained in an action plan.

4.4 We will comply with our legal and regulatory obligations in respect of 'high risk' buildings, as defined by the Building Safety Regulator.

4.5 We will provide clear and accessible advice and information to residents on fire safety issues, including the proper use of communal areas.

## **5. Legislation and regulation**

5.1 This policy will help us to comply with the following legal requirements:

- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Decent Homes Standard
- The Housing Act 2004
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act, 2002

## **6. Regulator for Social Housing – Regulatory Standards**

6.1 Safety and Quality Standard

We will ensure that we meet all our regulatory responsibilities in respect of building safety and keeping residents informed about safety issues affecting them.

## **7. The policy approach**

### Our obligations

7.1 We will appoint competent Fire Risk Assessors to ensure we can deliver a programme of Fire Risk Assessments ("FRAs") for our property portfolio that contain common areas as described in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

7.2 When undertaking FRAs we will set target completion times for fire actions, based on the scale of the assessed risk. The actions will form part of a property action plan.

7.3 We will monitor and manage all responsive repairs relating to fire to ensure that the actions identified in the FRAs are completed in accordance with their urgency.

7.4 Documented management procedures will be developed to ensure a consistent application of fire safety standards across our housing stock and to support staff

in carrying out their duties. These will include areas such as fire risk assessment, fire inspection, management of communal areas, resident engagement, fire alarm testing and any other areas concerning fire safety.

7.5 We will provide information on the fire safety measures we have taken for the properties we manage and clearly set out our responsibilities and those of residents. We will include fire safety information in our communications with residents and on our website and ensure that we review the advice regularly.

7.6 We will undertake inspections of common areas to ensure the areas are free of obstructions and hazards, and items that may pose a fire risk.

7.7 We will resolve repair service failures as promptly as possible, keep residents informed of progress and where appropriate follow the Housing Division's complaints procedure.

7.8 We will publish our performance relating to fire safety on our website on an annual basis.

### Residents' obligations

7.9 We require all our residents (both tenants and leaseholders) to:

- look after their homes and maintain the fire integrity of the common areas by reporting any potential fire hazards.
- refrain from putting combustible items in common areas and on balconies.
- avoid using balconies and common areas for storage.
- keep all fire escape routes free from obstruction and not to interfere with any fire door or escape route.
- cooperate with us in meeting our fire safety obligations by following reasonable requests.

### Access

7.10 In accordance with the terms of their tenancies or leases, residents are obliged to allow access for essential FRA inspections.

7.11 We will be as flexible as we reasonably can be when it comes to setting appointments for access. We expect residents to cooperate with us and our contractors when they are seeking to arrange access and to take steps to rearrange appointments if they are not convenient.

### Vulnerable tenants

7.12 We recognise that some vulnerable residents may require extra support to comply with the terms of their tenancy or lease. We will provide appropriate support and adjustments, while balancing this with our obligation to maintain building safety.

### Reporting

7.13 We will collect performance and management data and provide internal reports for the purpose of managing our FRA and management action plans monthly. We will report progress to Committee on a regular basis and provide a fire action performance report to residents on an annual basis.

## **8. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Performance**

8.1 Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation rests with the Assistant Director of Housing and Property Services.

8.2 Fire safety forms part of our compliance reporting. Fire safety performance indicators will be reported regularly, together with any significant issues that arise.

8.3 We will monitor the implementation of this policy and performance via a program of assessments and inspections. This will provide data to reflect the effectiveness of this policy, and to identify opportunities to further improve in our management of fire risk.



## **9. Training**

9.1 The Housing Division will provide essential fire safety information (e.g. evacuation procedures and what to do if a fire alarm sounds) to all new staff on induction with refresher training being rolled out periodically.

9.2 Staff with fire safety responsibilities will be identified to receive additional training on the requirements of their role, with refresher training being completed every three years or sooner if required. This training would normally cover areas such as hazard identification, reporting procedures, operation/testing procedures of fire alarms, emergency lights and other fire equipment as appropriate to the individual staff members role.

## **10. Associated policies or strategies**

- Housing Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Estate Management Policy
- Gas Safety Policy

## **11. Equalities**

11.1 This Policy has been subject to a full Equalities Analysis and will be implemented in accordance with our responsibilities and duties under relevant legislation, including the Equalities Act 2010.

## **12. Data Protection**


12.1 We will comply with our obligations under relevant data protection legislation and regulations. We will process and store personal information securely.

### **13. Exceptions**

13.1 We may make an exception to the approach outlined in this policy if the circumstances require it and it is reasonable to do so. Our reasoning can be provided to the affected parties on request.

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## 14. Document Management

<b>Department of Community &amp; Children's Services</b>		
<b>Housing Service</b>		
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