

Fire Safety Policy

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Summary

Housing 21 (H21) is committed to ensuring that our residents' homes and office premises are safe and secure place in which to live and work. We aim to ensure that so far as reasonably practicable our residents, employees, contractors, and public are not exposed to any risks to their health and safety from fire.

This policy supports us to meet our obligations as a responsible landlord and employer and provides assurance that fire safety is appropriately managed throughout the organisation.

This policy applies to all property owned, leased, or managed by Housing 21 and to all employees who will be expected to meet their fire safety responsibilities.

This policy has been drafted in consultation with and approved by our Primary Authority, Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (created 23 December 2014).

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

Housing 21 aspires to embed diversity and inclusion within all our organisational activities to enable these principles to become part of our everyday processes.

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Legislation
The Building Safety Act 2022
Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
Fire Safety Act 2021
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
The Building (Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended
The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire)(Safety) Regulations 1988
Guidance
Fire Safety in Specialised Housing 2017

1. Aims, Objectives and Approach

- 1.1 Housing 21 will take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent and control the risk from fire in the properties that we own or manage on behalf of third parties.
- 1.2 We will provide employees, residents, volunteers, and contractors with clear advice on fire safety, including evacuation strategies within buildings.
- 1.3 We will provide a clear and transparent process for undertaking fire risk assessments (FRA's) and any subsequent works that arise because of the assessment.
- 1.4 We are committed to keeping our residents, employees, and visitors safe from fire risk and meeting our obligations as a Responsible Person under all current and relevant legislation, including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Fire Safety Act 2021, Building Safety Act 2022, Building Regulations and best practice.

2. Scope

The policy identifies the fire safety arrangements for Housing 21 to ensure we meet our fire safety obligations protecting our residents, employees, and visitors from risks to their health and safety from fire.

2.1 Employees

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined and understood.
- Using competent, skilled, and well-trained employees
- Providing staff with training commensurate to their role

2.2 Residents

- Actively engage with resident on matters of building safety and building compliance
- Meet the needs of residents who inform us they have a disability such as a hearing impairment and install appropriate equipment to ensure they are alerted in the event of a fire and can evacuate safely.

2.3 This policy should be considered alongside other Housing 21 policies, key organisational strategies, and supporting guidance, this list is not exhaustive:

- Health and Safety Management Arrangements
- Fire Safety Strategy and System
- Health and Safety Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Asbestos Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Gas Safety Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Chief Executive retains overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 3.2 The Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the objectives of this policy to be met.
- 3.3 The Deputy Chief Executive is the 'Accountable Person' as defined in the Building Safety Act 2022 in relation to higher-risk buildings owned or managed by Housing 21. As the Accountable Person the Deputy Chief Executive is responsible for maintaining the system of mandatory occurrence reporting.
- 3.4 The Director of Strategic Asset Management is responsible for the operational delivery of the policy, ensuring this policy is reviewed and kept up to date and will regularly report to the Executive Team (ET), Safety Forum and Board on

the progress and performance of the Fire Risk Assessment programme, which shall include:

- Ongoing completion of fire risk assessments within the agreed timescales
- Completion of remedial actions identified in the FRA programme against an action plan
- FRA actions that are overdue against the action plan for completion

3.6 The National Health & Safety Manager is responsible for ensuring that any associated procedures are up to date and that the policy and associated procedures are implemented, as well as responsibility for monitoring and review, employee awareness and training and policy development.

3.7 The Head of Group Property Compliance is responsible for organising, managing, and monitoring the maintenance and servicing contracts in respect of fire safety systems e.g.,

- Fire Alarm systems
- Emergency lighting
- Sprinkler systems

3.8 Housing Management teams have operational responsibility for property and tenancy management. These teams manage the response or completion, as appropriate, of fire risk assessment actions relevant to the management of properties or tenancies, including completion of Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessments, management of issues relating to inappropriate storage and hoarding.

4. Fire Doors

4.1 Housing 21 will, in accordance with the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 on all buildings over 11m in height:

- undertake quarterly checks of all fire doors (including self-closing devices) in the common parts.

- undertake, on a best endeavours basis, complete annual checks of all flat entrance doors (including self-closing devices) that lead onto the building's common parts.
- 4.2 Housing 21 has in place arrangements for fire doors in buildings below 11 metres to be inspected as part of the annual fire risk assessment process and in addition, visually inspected by housing teams monthly.
- 4.3 Housing 21 will provide residents with information on the importance of keeping fire doors closed, not tampering with self-closing devices and reporting any faults or damage to fire doors immediately to housing teams.

5. Mandatory Occurrence Reporting – in occupation

- 5.1 Housing 21 will establish and operate a mandatory occurrence reporting (MOR) system for buildings when occupied by residents. The system will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective.

The system will enable prompt reporting by:

- all residents
- accountable persons
- others who use the building

- 5.1 Where the Accountable Person becomes aware of a safety occurrence:
- A mandatory occurrence notice will be submitted as soon as possible after a safety occurrence has been identified, and before the report is submitted.
 - A mandatory occurrence report will be submitted after submitting the notice and within 10 calendar days of identifying the safety occurrence.

5.2 Criteria for mandatory occurrence notice

A mandatory occurrence notice will be submitted to the BSR when a safety occurrence has caused or is likely to cause:

- the death of a significant number of people
- serious injury of a significant number of people

A safety occurrence is an incident involving, or a risk that could cause:

- structural failure of the building
- the spread of fire or smoke in the building

A safety occurrence is something which if not remedied, could cause serious harm to people when the building is in use.

- 5.3 If an incident is reported to the fire service, a mandatory occurrence notice will also be submitted if it meets the criteria of 5.2.

4. Implementation and Communication

- 4.1 Housing 21's Fire Risk Management Strategy and System (FRMSS) document defines fire safety arrangements for properties it owns or manages and the method of implementing the Fire Safety Policy.

The FRMSS addresses the seven factors of strategic fire risk management:

1. Fire risk assessment
2. Resources and authority
3. Fire safety training
4. Control of work on site
5. Maintenance and testing
6. Communication
7. Emergency planning

- 4.2 Housing 21 will prepare and maintain a safety case for each high-rise residential building owned or managed by Housing 21

- 4.3 To ensure effective fire safety communication, Housing 21 will:
- brief residents, employees, and contractors on fire safety arrangements and emergency evacuation procedures.

- consult with employees on fire safety policy, procedures, and arrangements for ensuring fire safety.
- engage openly and proactively with the Regulator of Social Housing and other stakeholders.
- co-operate and co-ordinate, as necessary, with any other responsible persons (as defined by the FSO).

4.5 Housing 21 will provide management Information to include:

- accurate asset information
- maintaining and servicing fire safety assets
- completing remedial works and supplementary testing as required
- gas and electrical safety checks for all residential properties

5. Monitoring and Review

- 5.1 This policy will be subject to review every three years unless there any legal or regulatory changes are required.
- 5.2 To check the policy is being implemented correctly by managers, there will be routine reporting and oversight to include risk assessments; accident and incident reporting; compliance data.

6. Procedures and associated policies

Electrical Safety Policy

Gas Safety Policy

Mobility Scooter Policy

Person Centred Fire Risk Assessment

[Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Testing](#)