

Fire Risk Assessment Policy

1.0 SCOPE

Purpose

- 1.1 This document sets out whg's Policy for keeping our customers and others safe, by ensuring we meet our legal and regulatory obligations to carry out appropriate Fire Risk Assessments (FRA).
- 1.2 These obligations apply to the common parts of flatted accommodation or other buildings where we have a legal obligation as the landlord to ensure fire safety and keep our customers, colleagues, contractors and visitors safe.

Legal and regulatory framework

- 1.3 Our responsibilities in relation to fire risk assessments are set out in legislation. We must comply with the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO) and the Housing Act 2004 for purpose-built blocks of flats. Under FSO it is a requirement for landlords to ensure that a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment is undertaken to all common areas in blocks of flats, maisonettes and the common areas of Homes of Multiple Occupancy. These assessments must be undertaken by a competent person with the 'training and experience or knowledge and other qualities'.
- 1.4 The Corporate Director of Business Strategy and Assets is the 'responsible person' at whg for ensuring compliance with the FSO.
- 1.5 The Governance and Financial Viability Standard of the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) states that Registered Providers, like whg, shall 'adhere to all relevant law'.
- 1.6 The RSH's Home Standard requires Registered Providers to meet all applicable statutory requirements for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes, including fire safety.

- 1.7 Registered Providers are subject to regulatory intervention and enforcement action if found to have caused 'harm or potential harm that may be caused to tenants by a breach of standards', known as 'serious detriment'.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Systematic regime

- 2.1 We will undertake a systematic regime of carrying out fire risk assessments of common areas by suitably competent colleagues to all of our multi-storey (4 storeys or more) and low rise blocks to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, they are free from fire risks and hazards.
- 2.2 Fire risk assessments are compiled following the principles of a risk assessment priority grading that is considered to present a suitable level of fire safety taking in account the complexity of the building, proposed occupancy levels and local conditions.
- 2.3 We will take prompt remedial action to manage or remove any fire risks or hazards identified during a fire risk assessment.
- 2.4 Any issues that may compromise fire safety within whg blocks of flats identified by colleagues, customers, contractors and visitors will be reported, when noted, and acted upon in accordance with our repair policy and procedures.

whg's Responsibility

- 2.5 Responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 [the Order] rests with the "responsible person" and the "responsible person" for whg is the Corporate Director of Business Strategy and Assets.
- 2.6 Where necessary an action plan(s) will be created following the fire risk assessment detailing what work is required, which service area is responsible and the timescales that any remedial works will be completed by.
- 2.7 whg will work closely with all stakeholders affected by this Policy particularly the Fire Service who can offer advice and guidance on how to ensure compliance with current fire safety standards. whg will also accept and act up on any findings following inspections carried out by the Fire Service.
- 2.8 On completion of the fire risk assessment there will be a statement indicating what the overall risk to life is from a fire at the premises. The levels are classed along the following Fire Service guidelines:-

Trivial - no action required and no detailed records need to be kept.

Tolerable – No major additional controls required. However, there might be a need for improvements that involve minor or limited cost.

Moderate – It is essential that efforts are made to reduce the risk. Risk reduction measures should be implemented within a defined time period. Where moderate risk is associated with consequences that constitute extreme harm, further assessment might be required to establish more precisely the likelihood of harm as a basis for determining the priority for improved control measures

Substantial – Considerable resources might have to be allocated to reduce the risk. If the building is unoccupied, it should not be occupied until the risk has been reduced. If the building is occupied, urgent action should be taken.

Intolerable – Building (or relevant area) should not be occupied until the risk is reduced.

Customer engagement

- 2.9 whg will be proactive in providing general fire safety advice e.g. leaflets, sign up packs and website links to customers on what to do in the event of a fire in their block of flats and other fire safety issues.
- 2.10 We will provide a range of ways for customers to raise any fire or other safety concerns with us.
- 2.11 whg will identify a responsible person (duty holder) who will have responsibility for the oversight of remedial actions that have been identified on fire risk assessments.
- 2.12 Customers are to take necessary fire precautions within their flat and keep up to date with whg`s stay safe policy and fire safety guidance.

Balconies

- 2.13 whg will enforce a zero tolerance approach to the storage of all potential ignition sources and fuels on flat balcony areas (paper, wood, oils, gasoline, gas canisters, rubber, alcohol, acetone, methanol).

Electric Mobility Scooters

- 2.14 Internal corridors, hallways, landings and stairwells must be kept free of any obstruction including electric mobility scooters. A zero tolerance approach to fire safety is operated and any obstruction will be removed.

- 2.15 Where there is a potential breach of tenancy, we will work with customers to give them the opportunity to put the issue right before considering other responses. This will be in accordance with the Tenancy Management Policy.

Asset Definition

- 2.16 whg has categorised the types of flats, inclusive of community rooms against their associated level of fire risk. The two categories are: -
- Category 1 – Multi storey blocks (4 floors or more), Community Rooms and Wellbeing Schemes
 - Category 2 – Low Rise blocks

3.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

FRA Assessments

- 3.1 The categories of buildings identified in section 2.1 have been risk rated as follows, for the appropriate risk assessment criteria;

Category 1 - Period not exceeding 12 months from previous assessment.
Category 2 - Period not exceeding 24 months from previous assessment.

Remedial Works Action Plans

- 3.2 Depending on the outcome of the fire risk assessment, where remedial actions are required, an action plan comprising of the following business areas will be created;
- Repairs
 - Tenancy Services
 - Neighbourhood Services.
 - Capital and improvement works.
- 3.3 We will regularly monitor, audit and report to the Fire Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Committee, with our performance and risk management frameworks.

4.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 4.1 Fire risk assessments consider the needs of all occupants and passive and active fire safety measures are designed to ensure people are not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics.

5.0 TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION

- 5.1 Article 21 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, requires an employer to ensure that his or her employees are provided with adequate fire safety training.
- 5.2 Fire risk assessments will be undertaken by a competent person with the 'training and experience or knowledge and other qualities'.
- 5.3 All colleagues are required to complete an e-learning module on fire safety. Colleagues with responsibility for specifying and carrying out remedial works associated with fire risk assessments will receive additional bespoke training as necessary to ensure competence.

6.0 MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 6.1 This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Home Maintenance Service and be reviewed and approved in May 2021, by the Policy Group; to ensure we capture any fundamental changes to the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 (FSO) or the Housing Act 2004 (for purpose-built blocks of flats).
- 6.2 FRA inspections programmes and programmed works identified, are reported to the Fire Safety Group on a quarterly basis to ensure whg are compliant providing assurance to the Health and Safety Committee and other Boards.

7.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 7.1 Documents, policies and procedures associated with this Policy are:
 - The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - whg Repairs Policy
 - Housing Act 2004
 - The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
 - The Building Regulations 2000 (as amended) - Approved Document B (Fire Safety) Volume 2 – Buildings other than dwelling houses (2006 edition)
 - Communities and Local Government Guidance document – Fire Safety Risk Assessment – sleeping accommodation
 - Local Authorities Co-coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) – Housing fire Safety
 - FRA Procedure
 - Building a Safer Future - Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: final report
 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
 - Fire Safety around your home - Review No Tolerance process
 - whg Tenancy Agreement
 - Tenancy Management Policy
 - whg Health and Safety Policy

Document author	Stephen Walters, Home Maintenance Project Manager
Document owner	Nigel Harris, Director of Home Maintenance Services
Legal advice	None
Consultation	Not required
Approved by	Policy Group 17 May 2021
Review Date	May 2022
Corporate Plan aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver high quality homes and services for our customers
Equality analysis	Not required
Key changes made	Updates made to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added section 4, 'Training and Dissemination'• Tenancy Management Policy added to associated documents, policies and procedures• Added section 2.11 – Balconies• Added sections 2.12, 2.13 – Electric mobility scooters