



Fire Safety Policy

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1. Policy Statement

ng homes are committed to ensuring that our homes, communal blocks and other properties we own and manage, where the risks from fire is reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

ng homes aim to ensure its' homes are maintained to a high standard through the delivery of efficient and effective repair and maintenance services.

This Policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst staff and contractors. It will be saved on our shared drive and distributed to all relevant members of staff.

2. 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, residents, staff, visitors and firefighters and is 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 and all other relevant legislation.

3. Legislation and Statutory Requirements

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Control of Substances Harmful to Health 2002
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equalities Act 2010
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Tolerable Standard
- Repairing Standard
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2006, 2010 and 2014
- Right to Repair (Housing Scotland Act 1987 as amended 2001 and 2010).

- Right to Compensation for Improvements 1987 (Housing Scotland Act 2001 and 2010)
- The Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 and Code of Conduct (2021)
- Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 2002
- The Building (Scotland) Regulations and Building Standards 2017
- Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011

4. Guidance

- BS 5839-6:2019+2020
- BS 5499
- Scottish Technical Handbooks Domestic and Non-Domestic (appropriate sections) (Scotland only).
- Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS)
- Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) standard parts 3 and 4, guidance and Annual Assurance Statement requirements.
- SFHA Good Practice Guidance Repairs and Maintenance – 2012
- Scottish Government Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Existing High-Rise Domestic Buildings
- Guide to Undertaking Technical Assessments of Fire Performance of Construction Products Based on Fire Test Evidence.

The list is not intended to be exhaustive. Staff need to be aware of relevant revisions to guidance and regulations periodically take place and it is their individual responsibility to apply and follow current legislation and guidance.

5. Scope

This Policy applies to all Board, Committee members, tenants and residents where ng homes has a repairing obligation, members of staff whether employees of ng homes or sub-contractors irrespective of grade, position, or length of service responsible for the management of repairs and maintenance within ng homes.

The Policy applies to the management of property owned by ng homes and subject to a Scottish Secure Tenancy, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, a Shared Ownership Occupancy Agreement Lock up Agreement or Lease.

The Policy also applies to common areas where ng homes is the factor and should be read in conjunction with the Repair and Maintenance Policy.

6. Fire Risk Assessment

The legal requirements for Fire Risk Assessments can be complicated and often misunderstood.

Domestic premises are sometimes thought to be excluded, all areas defined as workplaces must be assessed for risk, including plant rooms and other non-tenant-accessible areas.

Common areas of domestic premises require to be maintained in a certain condition suitable for the fire brigade and ng homes will undertake a 'representative' risk assessing programme.

Therefore, ng homes will create a Fire Risk Assessment Procedure and arrange for competent consultants to carry out fire risk assessments and regular reviews in accordance with the Procedure.

Fire risk assessment must only be undertaken by a suitably competent and qualified Fire Risk Assessor.

Competency requirements are described in the Guide to Undertaking Technical Assessments of Fire Performance of Construction Products Based on Fire Test Evidence.

The fire safety risk assessment will be kept under continuous review.

7. Fire and Smoke Alarms

The Association will provide smoke and heat alarms in every property in compliance with the Scottish Building Standards.

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

ng homes will ensure that fire and smoke alarms are in proper working order at the start of each tenancy.

ng homes will ensure that all smoke alarms are installed in accordance with the recommendations contained in BS EN14604:2005 and heat alarms comply with BS 5446-2:2003.

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.). These will be installed in addition to smoke alarms, heat alarms or carbon monoxide detectors.

8. Unwanted Fire Alarm Activations

From 1 July 2023, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) will no longer attend automatic fire alarm (AFA) call outs to commercial business and workplace premises, such as factories, offices, shops and leisure facilities - unless a fire has been confirmed.

ng homes with a responsibility for workplace premises under their control, will safely investigate a fire alarm before calling 999. Scottish Fire Service control room operators will ask for confirmation of an actual fire, or signs of fire, before sending the nearest resource.

SFRS will treat any fire alarm as a sign of fire, other than from a single smoke detector. Other signs of fire include:

- Visual flame/smoke
- Smell of burning
- Any other fire alarm signal

Sleeping premises, such as hospitals, care homes, hotels or domestic dwellings will continue to get an emergency response.

9. Fire Doors and Compartmentation

Buildings containing flats and maisonettes will be split into fire-resisting compartments by fire-resisting doors, walls and floors which will provide a physical barrier to fire.

Flat entrance fire doors leading to a shared or communal area are required to provide fire and smoke protection and are critical to most fire strategies for buildings.

Any new or replacement fire door leading on to communal areas shall meet the requirements of the Scottish Building Standards Domestic Technical Handbook (current version).

Fire doors in high-rise domestic buildings, commercial buildings, HMOs, etc. will have fire doors inspected every six months in the communal areas. There are no such recommendations to do similar inspections on fire doors in general low-rise domestic properties.

Fire door inspections shall check as a minimum:

- if there has been any alterations or damage to glazing apertures or air transfer grille
- if there are any gaps around the door frame and that seals and hinges are fitted correctly
- that the door closer shuts the door
- that the door closes correctly around the whole frame
- that there is no visible damage (either deliberate or from wear and tear) to the door or door closer

10. Access and Facilities for the Fire Service

ng homes will ensure:

- There must be proper external access to the building to allow fire appliances to be brought close to the building for effective use.
- There must be adequate access points into and within the building to allow firefighting personnel to search, rescue and fight fire.
- The building must be equipped with sufficient internal fire mains and other facilities to assist firefighters in carrying out their duties.

11. Houses of Multiple Occupation, High-rise Buildings and Commercial Buildings

All licenced HMOs and commercial premises managed by ng homes:

- Will be fire risk assessed by a competent assessor, with periodicity determined by the fire risk assessment
- Will have doors opening in the direction of escape
- Will be supplied with appropriate, maintained extinguishers
- Will have the fire evacuation procedure details relayed to relevant persons

12. Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting will be installed in buildings considered to be at higher risk. In a building containing flats or maisonettes emergency lighting will be provided in the following areas (where relevant):

- an underground car park including any protected zone serving it, where less than 30% of the perimeter of the car park is open to the external air.
- a protected zone or unprotected zone serving a basement storey or a protected zone or unprotected zone in a high-rise domestic building.

The emergency lighting should be installed in accordance with BS 5266: Part 1: 2016 as read in association with BS 5266: Part 7: 1999 (BS EN: 1838: 2013).

To assist the evacuation of occupants in high-rise domestic buildings, every protected lobby, protected zone (including escape stairs) and any other associated escape route should be provided with emergency lighting designed and installed in accordance with BS 5266: Part 1: 2005 as read in association with (BS EN: 1838: 2013).

13. Emergency Exit Doors

ng homes will ensure all doors which are to be used in an emergency can be opened from the inside without the use of a key.

14. Signage

Fire action signs will be placed in the corridors, entrance doors, and common areas on all levels of the building. These fire safety signs will comply with BS 5499 and the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.

15. Heat and Smoke Control

SFRS will be provided with the facility to release smoke and heat from a fire during their firefighting and rescue operations.

Ventilation should be provided to every escape stair, fire-fighting stair, fire-fighting lobby and to every protected lobby or protected corridor where appropriate.

16. Fire Equipment

Sprinklers may be installed where ng homes is unable to reduce particular risks by other means.

ng homes will not install fire extinguishers in dwellings as tenants and residents are not likely to 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.

To assist SFRS:

- Dry risers will be installed in any building that is over 18 metres in height.
- Wet risers will be installed in buildings over 50 metres in height.
- Outlets will be present on each floor and located in a fire escape staircase or similar protected location.

17.Maintenance and Repairs

ng homes is committed to ensuring that all premises, equipment, and devices provided for fire safety are well-maintained. To achieve this, we have put in place a suitable system of maintenance to keep them in an efficient state, efficient working order, and good repair.

In case any repairs are needed, ng homes will ensure that they are carried out within the timescale set in our repair policy by a competent person.

Clear records will be maintained of the processes in place and actions carried out.

18.Tenant and Resident Responsibilities

ng homes have limited control over the activities of tenants and residents within their flats; this is compounded by other parts of the building perhaps being under different ownership.

Varying levels of knowledge regarding fire safety will exist among tenants. It is important, therefore, that tenants and residents are fully informed regarding their responsibilities in Fire Safety within the building.

ng homes include fire safety obligations within tenancy agreements and will issue regular fire safety information through our normal communication channels. The factoring team contact the owners to highlight their fire safety obligations.

Tenants are reminded to:

- test smoke alarms on a weekly basis;
- ensure all communal areas are not obstructed;
- ensure fire doors are not propped open or otherwise disabled, and;
- Where there is any damage to entrance door sets these must be reported immediately.

A door set is a complete door assembly, assembled on site or delivered as a completed assembly, consisting of the door frame, door leaf or leaves, essential hardware and any integral side panel or fanlight (but excluding coupled assembly, a door set and window that are supplied as separate self-contained frames and fixed together on site).

Tenants, where relevant, will be provided with information on the fire detection system and evacuation procedures / assembly points.

ng homes tenancy agreements will state that front doors cannot be changed without the express permission of ng homes.

Communication methods will take account of tenants any language or learning difficulties (e.g. braille, audio, different language, etc.).

19.Training

ng homes will provide appropriate training for relevant staff on this policy and any related processes or procedures.

20.Periodic Audit and Review

Periodic audits shall be conducted to confirm that the policy objectives are being achieved and to implement any changes in the operational procedures that are required.

21.Non-compliance/Escalation Process

All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred or becoming aware of it.

In cases of serious non-compliance, the CEO will advise the Association's Board of the proposed course of action which may be subject to Board approval. The issue will be disclosed to the Scottish Housing Regulator, and any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive.

Where the matter is considered to be a notifiable event the Association's Notifiable Events Policy, and the SHR Statutory Guidance on Notifiable Events, will be followed.

22. Conclusion

ng homes is committed to providing its' tenants and residents with safe and healthy homes.

By following this Policy, ng homes aims to prevent any issues with fire safety from occurring within its' properties and to deal with any problems that occur promptly and effectively.

23. Other Related Strategies, Policies and Procedures

- Adaptations Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Clerk of Works Procedures
- Customer Care Policy
- Design and Specification Policy
- Development Defects Policy and Procedures
- Development Handover Procedures Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Estate Management Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- No Access Policy
- Notifiable Events Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Tenants Right to Repair Policy
- Void Management policy
- Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 (Code of Conduct for Property Factors)

24. UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021 (UK GDPR)

The ng group will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation 2021 (UK GDPR) and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notices. The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notices.

25.Equality Impact Assessment

This Policy is equally applicable to all. It is recognised that in applying this Policy any necessary action will be taken where appropriate, including making reasonable adjustments, to ensure that there is no detrimental impact to protected characteristics groups.

26.Review

This Policy will be reviewed every five years or earlier in line with regulatory or legislative guidance/changes or good practice guidelines.