

Fire Safety Policy

M.07

Reviewed

Date May 2024
(updated July 2024 due to new staff structure)

Date next due for review:

May 2027

Equality and diversity policy statement

This policy document can be produced in various formats, for instance, in larger print or audio-format; and it can also be translated into other languages, as appropriate.

Our equality and diversity policy statement describes our key equality commitments that we use to develop all organisational services; this includes employment services and services to tenants and other customers.

Our core values include providing a fair and equal service for all people and this is detailed in our Equality and Diversity Policy. Our approach to implementing this policy will reflect that commitment.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is recognised that Pineview Housing Association (PHA) has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, as supported by subordinate legislation, to provide for, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees, service users, contractors, the general public and others who may be affected by its undertakings.
- 1.2 PHA operates a Health & Safety Management System, which comprises a broad range of documented policies, procedures and arrangements for the effective control of risks to the health, safety and welfare of employees and others.
- 1.3 This policy forms part of the overall Management System and sets out the Association's specific arrangements for the management of fire safety.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 To set out a framework that will enable PHA to understand, mitigate and manage the risks from fire for our homes, common areas and workplace.
- 2.2 To minimise the risk of harm from fire in or around our homes and workplace.
- 2.3 To take all reasonable steps to ensure we are compliant with legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 2.4 To ensure that residents and visitors can enjoy safe access to, and use of, our services and facilities. In addition, ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and welfare of our employees and other persons who may be affected by our activities.
- 2.5 To set out a clear approach to assessing, controlling and monitoring the risk of fire within PHA properties and office premises.
- 2.6 To keep the general public, tenants and employees aware of the risks of fire and as far as reasonably practical ensure they are safe from danger.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Management Committee

- 3.1.1 The Management Committee will be responsible for:
 - Overall corporate responsibility for the conduct of the business of Pineview Housing Association.
 - Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy.
 - Considering reports made by the Director / Housing Services Manager on the effectiveness of this policy and actual working practices.

3.2 Director

- 3.2.1 The Director will be responsible for:
 - Holding ultimate accountability and responsibility for the development and implementation of this Fire Safety Policy as he / she holds the most senior level of executive control within the Association.

- Making available all reasonable resources to the Housing Services Manager for the undertaking of his / her duties under this policy. The Director will also make available all reasonable resources to allow all others in the management chain to comply with their own defined responsibilities.
- Ensuring adequate lines of communication with the Housing Services Manager and taking all reasonable steps to comply with all reasonable fire safety requests and issues raised by the Housing Services Manager.
- Acting immediately if any serious deficiencies are identified and escalating any concerns to the Management Committee without undue delay.

3.3 Housing Services Manager – Fire Safety Responsible Person

3.3.1 The Housing Services Manager will be responsible for:

- The practical delivery and implementation of this Fire Safety Policy and for identifying amendments / updates for improvement. All such suggested amendments will be escalated to the Director without undue delay.
- Responding appropriately to any new and evolving legislation and guidance in relation to fire safety and detection to ensure required standards are met.
- Monitoring to ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities under this policy.
- Ensuring that staff receive appropriate fire safety awareness training and are encouraged to develop and promote safe working practices and attitudes towards fire safety.
- Providing all reasonable support to the Maintenance Officer to ensure his / her duties under this policy may be performed accurately and timeously.
- Ensuring adequate lines of communication with the Maintenance Officer and taking all reasonable steps to comply with all reasonable fire safety requests and issues raised by the Maintenance Officer.
- Escalating all relevant fire safety issues, non-conformances, policy breaches and other material events to the Director without undue delay.
- Review and update as necessary this policy and associated procedures documents and report on its effectiveness to Management Committee.

3.4 Maintenance Officer– Fire Safety Co-ordinator

3.4.1 The Maintenance Officer will be responsible for:

- Organising a programme of annual fire risk assessments, preparing an action plan based on the fire risk assessment reports / recommendations and ensuring that remedial actions are taken so far as reasonably practicable to remove or mitigate fire hazards to a tolerable level within an appropriate timescale.
- Advising on / implementing appropriate fire safety measures required in connection with PHA properties, alterations to existing properties etc.
- Advising on / implementing technical and legislative matters on fire safety, ensuring compliance according to the relevant codes of practice and statutory requirements.
- Ensuring the appropriate and timely servicing, testing and maintenance of all fire safety equipment.
- Ensuring that relevant all fire safety documentation, service records and certification is received and also follow up repairs or issues are dealt with appropriately and timeously.
- Ensuring that fire safety documentation is kept readily available, in good order and up to date at all times.
- Ensuring that all planned works, day to day repairs and maintenance and refurbishments are carried out in accordance with the building regulations and other relevant legislation and take into consideration protective and preventative fire safety measures.

- Ensuring that there is no interference with any existing protective or preventative future safety measures unless a risk assessment has been completed and alternative temporary fire protection and prevention measures are put in place to protect the residents and the building.
- Ensuring that all works that may breach the protective fire safety measures in a building are made good to the same standard after the repair or maintenance has been completed. If the work is over a period of time alternative temporary fire protection and prevention measures are put in place before the works starts.
- Ensuring that contractors are advised of and comply with this fire safety policy, fire safety measures and associated procedures to ensure PHA's fire safety standards are maintained,
- Ensuring that PHA tender documents, specifications etc clearly set out the requirements regarding fire safety in PHA properties.
- Ensuring that all fixed electrical installations and portable appliances have electrical inspections completed at the relevant frequencies and in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

3.5 Senior Housing Officer

3.5.1 The Senior Housing Officer will be responsible for:

- Assisting the Housing Services Manager to review and update as necessary this policy and associated procedures documents.
- Ensuring regular estate management and property inspections are carried out. Where potential fire risks identified, appropriate actions are taken to record and deal with appropriately in accordance with PHA procedures.

3.6 Contractors

3.6.1 Contractors are required to:

- Assess the fire safety risks arising from their works / activities and implement appropriate control measures.
- Ensure they have appropriate RAMS (risk assessment and method statements) in place regarding fire safety.
- Co-operate with PHA on matters of fire safety.
- Ensure that they and all staff falling under their control have received appropriate information, instruction and training to enable them to comply with this policy and PHA emergency arrangements.
- Obey all instructions relating to fire safety given by authorised PHA staff.

3.7 Employees

3.7.1 All persons employed by PHA have a responsibility to comply with this Fire Safety Policy. This includes but is not limited to:

- Observing all instructions, information and training intended to secure fire safety.
- Co-operating with PHA on matters of fire safety.
- Taking adequate fire safety measures in all areas of work.
- Acquainting themselves with the fire safety measures and procedures that are applicable to their working environment and ensuring that they attend fire training sessions arranged for them.

- Not interfering with any building fabric or equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety.
- Completing visual checks when visiting PHA properties and report any issues and obvious defects.
- Seeking to identify any issues with smoke, heat or carbon monoxide detectors within PHA properties and identify any repairs to the Senior Maintenance Officer.
- Reporting any obvious defects or shortcomings in PHA's fire safety arrangements or procedures to the Housing Services Manager or Director as soon as possible.

3.8 Tenant Responsibilities

3.8.1 Tenants are responsible for meeting their obligations in preventing the risk of fire and to ensure the safety of other tenants and visitors.

3.8.2 We will issue regular fire safety information to remind tenants to:

- Test smoke detectors on a weekly basis.
- Ensure communal areas are kept free from any obstructions, slip or trip hazards and combustible materials.
- Not use the communal areas for storage of any items.
- Ensure fire doors are not propped open or otherwise disabled.
- Familiarise themselves with any evacuation procedure.

3.8.3 Tenants should be aware that changes they make to their home can impact on their own and others fire safety. Tenants should not:

- Tamper with or remove door closers on fire doors within their property.
- Tamper with, cover or remove smoke, heat or carbon monoxide detectors.
- Replace existing electrical fittings (light fittings, sockets etc) without approval from PHA.
- Damage plasterboard linings on separating walls within their property (the wall that separates one property from another)
- Make changes to their flat entrance door or door frame as this could reduce the integrity and fire performance of the door.

3.8.4 Where a tenant has made changes to their property that could impact on the fire safety of their property or the close/ building they live in PHA will recharge the tenant for any remedial works required to restore the property's fire integrity.

4. Fire Risk Assessments

4.1 A Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is a means of identifying potential fire hazards and rating the likelihood and possible severity of fire and enables PHA to put adequate measures in place to control the risks.

4.2 FRAs describe and identify actions (Fire Actions) required to be undertaken to remove or mitigate hazards to a tolerable level.

4.3 PHA will schedule and subsequently resolve all Fire Actions as far as reasonably practicable.

4.4 In order to meet our obligations as set out above PHA will carry out and document FRAs for:

- Our office
- Communal close areas

- 9 Pineview Court (HMO property)

4.5 We will appoint competent and suitably qualified fire safety specialists to carry out the FRAs

4.6 The aim of FRAs therefore is to:

- Identify fire hazards and to reduce the risk of those hazards to as low as is reasonably practicable, developing an Action Plan and implementing all necessary recommendations and managing the residual risk.
- Determine what fire safety measures and management systems are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the building should a fire occur.

5. Smoking

5.1 Smoking is not permitted by staff, tenants or other individuals in buildings where staff work or in communal close areas.

6. Communal Closes

6.1 Regular inspections of communal closes will take place by PHA staff.

6.2 During these visits PHA staff will inspect all areas to ensure fire exits are left clear, there are no combustible materials stored in communal areas and there is no damage that could cause an obstruction in / to entrances, landings, or stairs. This inspection will include the inside and outside of all communal areas.

6.3 Staff will be aware of the need to visually check for fire risks and in particular will check and report on:

- Fire equipment
- Fire doors e.g. which do not close properly or entrance doors which are not secure.
- Fire notices / signs
- Smoke vents
- Loft hatches
- Trip hazards on escape routes e, g, loose flooring, unauthorised belongings
- Other safety risks on escape routes including evidence of smoking in communal areas, loose handrails etc.

7. Fire Safety Equipment

7.1 Each PHA property was developed to meet the fire safety requirements at the time it was built. As a result, the nature and extent of fire safety equipment provided varies.

7.2 We have additional requirements for our HMO property which we will comply with.

7.3 PHA has a proactive approach to investment in our properties and will consider the recommendations of any fire risk assessment when carrying out investment works.

7.4 In accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019, PHA has a legal responsibility to ensure that every property, as a minimum, has an interlinked system, incorporating a smoke detector in the living room, hall and each

circulation space on each landing, a heat detector and a carbon monoxide detector in any room containing a fossil fuel burning appliance.

7.5 In accordance with the legal requirements to ensure that equipment and devices provided for the use by, or protection of fire-fighters are maintained in a good working order PHA will ensure that appropriate servicing, testing and maintenance for all fire safety equipment is carried out including:

- Dry risers
- Emergency lighting systems
- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Firefighting equipment e.g. fire extinguishers
- Smoke Ventilation – communal areas, where practicable will have adequate smoke ventilation either through natural means or by mechanical ventilation.

7.6 This also includes PHA standards for:

- Fire Compartmentation and fire doors.
- Fire Evacuation.
- Fire Signage.

7.7 The Maintenance Officer is responsible for ensuring the cyclical servicing, testing and maintenance of all fire safety equipment and implementation of PHA standards.

8. Documentation / Record Keeping

8.1 The Fire Safety Management System relies upon the maintenance of a range of documentation. The following records will be kept readily available, in good order, up to date and available for scrutiny at any time:

- Fire Safety Policy and Procedures Documents.
- Copy of the current fire risk assessments and associated action plan(s).
- Fire training records.
- Fire drills records.
- Records of fire alarm system / detectors testing.
- Record of inspection, servicing and testing of all firefighting equipment.
- Servicing records for gas servicing, electrical testing and servicing, emergency lighting

9. Training and Development

9.1 The training requirements of Management Committee and staff will be regularly assessed to ensure that they have the necessary skills to effectively implement and monitor this Fire Safety Policy.

10. Complaints

10.1 Anyone who is not happy /satisfied with the service they have received as a result of this policy has a right to complain. Please see the Association's Complaints Policy for details on how to do this.

11. Review /Consultation

11.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation or monitoring / reporting reveals that a change in policy is required sooner.

11.2 Procedures and working methods may be altered more frequently where this is needed.

11.3 Policy review will involve consultation with our tenants, our Customer Forum and any other relevant stakeholders as appropriate. We will take account of any views or representations in revising our policy and service provision to assist in the development of effective service delivery,