



## **SHA Electrical Safety Policy**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy is of vital importance in ensuring the health and safety not just of people who live in Southside’s properties, but also, those who live in the immediate area, work in, or visit their homes. As a landlord, Southside has a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of its tenants in properties and electrical installations have important safety implications. This policy sets out how we will fulfil these legal requirements.
- 1.2 The implications of neglecting these responsibilities are high; fire, explosion and electrocution can all occur as a result of neglect and can all have fatal consequences.

## **2. Scope of the Policy**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all tenants of Southside Housing Association including Scottish Secure Tenants, Short Scottish Secure Tenants, Mid-Market Rent tenants and those with occupancy agreements.
- 2.2 This policy covers the following:
- The safety of all fixed wiring in Association owned properties
  - The safety of all electrical appliances provided by Association for tenants or staff use.
  - The safety of all smoke/heat/CO alarms installed in tenanted properties owned by the Association.
  - The operation of all emergency lighting in Association owned properties.
  - The maintenance of automatic smoke windows in common areas of flats.

## **3. Aims and Objectives**

- 3.1 SHA is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and sustainability in the delivery of this service through fair and consistent policy procedure and practice.
- 3.2 We aim to:
- Ensure all of our electrical installations and appliances are operated and maintained in a safe and useable condition.
  - Provide a prompt, efficient and effective service, sympathetic to the customer’s needs.
  - Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations and to ensure our electrical installations and appliances are maintained in accordance with the landlord responsibilities.

- Prioritise and complete corrective actions identified within defined timeframes and promptly repair or renew any defective part of an electrical installation.
- Clearly define the levels and standards of service for the maintenance of electrical systems and appliances.
- Have in place an effective monitoring system of both staff and contractor's performance.
- Provide clear lines of responsibility for the management of electrical safety.
- Report regularly to the Management committee on performance.

#### **4. Policy Statement**

- 4.1 Every electrical installation deteriorates with use and time. If the safety of the users is not to be put at risk, it is important that every installation is periodically inspected and tested by a competent person.
- 4.2 The aim of this policy is to ensure the effective inspection, maintenance and management of all electrical installations, fixtures and appliances within premises controlled by the Association.
- 4.3 Landlords have a duty to ensure that the fixed wiring and any appliances they provide for tenant's use are safe at the time of letting. Inspection and testing provides, so far as reasonably practical, for
- The safety of persons against the effects of electric shock and burns.
  - Protection against damage to property by fire and heat arising from an installation defect.
  - Confirmation that the installation is not damaged or deteriorated to impair safety.
  - The identification of any installation defects and departures from the requirements of legislation and regulation that may give rise to danger.
- 4.4 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Association has a duty to ensure that staff are not put at risk due to poorly maintained appliances or wiring.
- 4.5 Landlords have a duty to ensure that all alarms provided for the detection of smoke/fire/heat and carbon monoxide are operating correctly and have not passed the manufacturers stamped replacement date.
- 4.6 Landlords have a duty to comply with all Government legislation in relation to the management of electrical installations.
- 4.7 The Association will also require any contractors to abide by relevant legislation and technical guidance.



We will:

- Record the date of the existing electrical safety inspection for every property's fixed wiring.
- Test all dwellings and produce a satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), every five years and/or during major electrical upgrade works or where electrical installations are affected. The current EICR will be provided, at every change of occupancy and at the time of any mutual exchange.
- Ensure that electric appliances provided are safe by carrying out a Portable Appliance Test at the void stage.
- Upgrade the coverage and type of smoke/heat/CO alarms to meet current legislation.
- Record the expiry date of alarms and operate a programme of replacement prior to the expiry date.
- Procure and manage contractors appropriately, ensuring that they are qualified to do the work they are required to do.
- Keep detailed records and monitor compliance.
- Publicise to our tenants on an annual basis the necessity to undertake electrical safety inspections highlighting the risks.
- Carry out inspections in accordance with best practice and ensure certificates of compliance are received for all work in relation to the correct operation of electrically operated fittings supplied in our homes and commercial premises to ensure the safety of our tenants and staff.

4.8 The Association will take responsibility for contractor management and monitoring and undertake day to day repair management and complaint resolution. We will also monitor inspections received from contractors.

#### Fixed Wiring in Domestic & Commercial Properties

4.9 All properties falling vacant must have an electrical safety inspection carried out irrespective of age. Properties cannot be let without a 'Satisfactory' Electrical Safety Inspection. All Cat1 & Cat2 remedial works as recommended by the electrical contractor must be completed prior to the new tenancy commencing. We will maintain a database that records the property address and date of inspection and the next recommended inspection date. We will operate our EICR programme on a 5-year cyclical programme for all domestic properties or less if recommended on the electrical safety certificate. We will ensure that the safety inspection is recorded in our document management system against the property address and ensure that an electronic copy is available at all times.

### Domestic Appliances

- 4.10 Where SHA provide appliances for tenants' use, we will carry out a Portable Appliance Test (PAT) to ensure the appliance is safe, annually and prior to any new let. The appliance will be renewed where the condition is deemed to be unsatisfactory.

### Appliances in Commercial Properties

- 4.11 SHA have a duty of care to ensure that tenants and staff are not put at risk through faulty appliances provided as part of a commercial let or by the employer for operatives to carry out their work duties. We will carry out regular PAT testing for all appliances with any items failing being disposed of and replaced as appropriate.

### Domestic Smoke/Heat/Co Alarms

- 4.12 The Association will comply with all current legislation concerning the coverage and placement of alarms within the home and integrated smoke and heat alarms and carbon monoxide detectors will be subject to an inspection regime of at least every five years. Additionally, we will inspect domestic integrated smoke and heat alarms and carbon monoxide detectors in the following circumstances and frequency:

- As part of the annual gas safety inspection – annually
- Installation of Quantum Heating systems – annually from date of installation
- Installation of Air Source Heat Pump systems - annually from date of installation.

- 4.13 The Association maintains a database detailing the date alarms have to be replaced. This will form a cyclic programme of replacement and will be managed internally.

### Emergency Lighting in Common Closets

- 4.14 The Association will arrange to carry out an emergency lighting test annually for common closes where emergency lighting exists. All repairs will be completed within seven days of notification. Installations with self-testing capabilities will be checked for faults after each test.

### Operation of Smoke Vents and Windows in Common Closets

- 4.15 We will carry out regular inspections on all automatic smoke vents provided to minimise the build-up of smoke in corridors and stairwells used as a means of exit. Inspection certificates will be recorded in our document management system against the property address to ensure that an electronic copy is available at all times. All

recommended defect work will be carried out to maintain the smoke vents/windows to a satisfactory operating standard.

## **5. Safety Checks and No Access Issues**

- 5.1 Carrying out regular safety checks is fundamentally important to our overall commitment to electrical safety. Repairs staff are responsible for monitoring the timing of all inspections and liaising with contractors over access.
- 5.2 Repairs administration staff are responsible for accurately maintaining all records in relation to the various programmes of work to ensure the safety of our tenants, staff and properties.
- 5.3 The Maintenance and Void Manager is responsible for the management of all staff and processes involved in the delivery of all programmes of work that fall within this Electrical Safety policy document.
- 5.4 For much of the work in this policy, access to common areas and commercial premises is readily available. For work in homes, access can be an issue, and it is particularly important as we need to ensure the fixed wiring is satisfactory and that smoke alarms where not working or have passed the manufacturers guarantee are replaced.
- 5.5 The Association will attempt to access properties twice by standard letter and telephone call as necessary. Where the tenant does not give access, we will send a letter advising them of the serious potential risk for continuing to deny access and we will book a third appointment. Where access again is refused without correspondence being received by the tenant, we will send out a forced access letter notice, advising the tenant that we will gain access and all associated attendance costs will be recharged to them.
- 5.6 The Association recognises that there may be specific tenancy management reasons why access has been unsuccessful. For example, health issues or where the tenant is away for an extended period of time. In these circumstances we will try and overcome or resolve the problem before opting to force access and recharge tenants.

## **6. Lettings & Mutual Exchanges**

- 6.1 All properties will receive an electrical safety inspection before letting. New tenants will receive a copy of the electric safety certificate as part of the new tenant sign up pack.
- 6.2 Any electrical appliance which has been installed by the previous tenant will be removed before letting. All non-standard light fittings will be removed and replaced with SHA void standard fittings. All illegal wiring will be removed and associated costs for rectifying the defect will be recharged to the outgoing tenant.

- 6.3 All properties will be upgraded to the new standard for fire detection as required in compliance with current legislation.

## **7. Contractor Selection and Control**

- 7.1 The Association will define a scope of works for the electrical safety contract and will follow through a rigorous contractor selection process.
- 7.2 Contractors will be required to demonstrate compliance with the competency requirements of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 and will be a member of an accredited registration scheme operated by a recognised body.
- 7.3 An Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) must be completed by a suitably competent person. “Competent person” means a skilled person (electrically) as defined in amendment 3 of BS7671. This means that they must be employed by a firm that is a member of an accredited registration scheme operated by a recognised body. In Scotland, this will usually mean that they are a registered with NICEIC or a member firm of the Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland (SELECT).
- 7.4 A formal system of contractor monitoring will be established and maintained to ensure the electrical safety management system continues to operate in compliance with the agreed scope of works and with documented procedures and that any non-conformances, ineffective arrangements and problem areas are quickly identified and acted upon.

## **8 Electrical Safety Budgeting**

- 8.1 Electrical safety will be funded from the Association’s cyclical maintenance budget. In order to ensure budgetary certainty, the Association will employ an electrical safety contractor to carry out electrical safety inspections, provide certification and carry out remedial works, subject to the Association’s Procurement Policy.
- 8.2 We will ensure that electrical safety services are planned, effectively budgeted for, and managed to a high standard. We will provide sufficient staff and staff training resources for electrical safety services as the needs of particular areas are identified.



## **9. Record Keeping**

- 9.1 The Association will establish and maintain a formal system for recording all activity in relation to electrical safety, associated repairs and remedials and all other relevant management data.
- 9.2 In relation to the electrical safety inspection programme, the Association will hold the following records as a minimum:
- Inspection records, findings, and actions.
  - Reports and communications from contractors.
  - No access reports and actions (audit trail) including abeyances where forced access is not appropriate.
  - Tenant correspondence.
  - Properties beyond 5-year inspection.
  - Intermediate safety checks on properties (voids)
  - Maintenance and repair/ remedial records.
  - Complaints.
- 9.3 All EICRs shall be held in electronic format, centrally stored, logged to the Register and linked to the relevant property record by Property Reference Number. Only certificates denoted “satisfactory” are admissible.

## **10. Repairs & Maintenance of Electrical Installations**

- 10.1 As well as safety checks, the Association is committed to investment in repairing and renewing electrical installations and appliances in its stock.
- 10.2 Cyclical and planned maintenance will be carried out on domestic and commercial installations, including a programme of rewiring in order to achieve compliance with Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).

## **11. Equality and Human Rights**

- 11.1 In applying the Electrical Safety policy, SHA will ensure it complies with the Equality Act 2010. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against, harass or victimise a person because they have one or more of the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 11.2 Where we are unable to gain access, we recognise that there may be reasons why access has been unsuccessful such as a language barrier or disability and there is potential for discrimination to take place either directly or indirectly. In these circumstances we will work with the tenant to ensure fair and equal access to services. We also balance our obligation to force access as a last resort to meet tenant and resident safety and legal obligations against an individual’s right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence set out in the Human Rights Act 1998

- 11.3 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been carried out with respect to the Electrical Safety Policy and is included as Appendix 1 of this policy.

## **12 Publicising this Policy**

- 12.1 The policy relating to electrical safety will be publicised on the Association's Website and will be made available to the public on request.

## **13 Policy Review**

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner, in the event of a significant legal or regulatory change which affects this policy or a change in operational requirements.
- 13.2 The policy, in parts, attempts to summarise current legislation. In any case of conflict between the two, legislation will always take precedence.

## **14 Training and Development**

- 14.1 Staff dealing with the management of electrical safety will have training appropriate to their needs and to the needs of the Association identified within their Personal Training Plans to ensure the safety of its tenants in properties where there are electrical installations and appliances.
- 14.2 This will include all relevant legislation as well as training on all internal procedures and record keeping.

## **15 Monitoring and Reporting**

- 15.1 The Director of Property Services is responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy and supporting procedures by staff, and for the maintenance of all necessary records to enable the compilation of regular reports on performance.
- 15.2 Targets will be set for monitoring performance for each aspect of dealing with electrical safety.
- 15.3 The Operations Sub Committee will receive reports on a quarterly basis as part of overall landlord and tenant safety reporting to allow effective monitoring of the electrical safety policy. These reports will include:
- Percentage of properties with a valid electrical safety certificate;
  - Number of forced accesses carried out;
  - Report on annual review of electrical safety procedures.

## 16 Legal and Regulatory Framework

16.1 In approving and implementing the electrical safety policy and associated procedures the Association aims to adhere to the following legislation and contractual obligations:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- Public Health (Scotland) Act 1987;
- The 18th Edition IEE Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2018);
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994;
- The Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008;
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard, and;
- Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

## 17 Compliance with Relevant Performance Standards

17.1 The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect in April 2012, and this sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Charter replaces the Performance Standards and states in terms of maintenance of its stock landlords should:

*Manage their business so that tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.*

*Manage their businesses so that tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.*

*Manage all aspects of their business so that tenants, owners, and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.*

17.2 Social landlords are responsible for meeting the standards and outcomes set out in the Charter. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) is responsible for monitoring, assessing, and reporting on how well social landlords, individually and collectively, achieve the outcomes.

17.3 We will, through operation of this policy and supporting procedures, demonstrate compliance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

17.4 The SHR's approach to monitoring landlords' achievement of the outcomes and standards in the Charter will be based on the landlord's performance

information and their own assessment of their performance. For each year ending on 31 March, landlords will be expected to:

- Measure and assess their performance in progressing towards or achieving the Charter outcomes and standards;
- Provide the Regulator with key performance information on their achievement of the outcomes and standards; and
- Report their performance to their tenants and other service users who use their services.

17.5 The Association will review each element of the Charter with its tenants and agree locally based standards designed to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes.

17.6 The SHR's – *Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland: Our Framework* (the Regulatory Framework) sets out a range of Regulatory Requirements and Standards which registered social landlords in Scotland must meet and comply with.

17.7 Regulatory Requirements which are relevant to this Policy are:

- **Regulatory Requirement AN3** - Each landlord must have assurance and evidence that it is meeting all of its legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety, and;
- **Regulatory Requirement AN4:** Notify us (SHR) of any tenant and resident safety matters which have been reported to or are being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive, or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities, or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.

## 18. Risk Management

18.1 The management of electrical safety represents risk to the Association in that:

- Failure to comply with relevant legislation may result in possible legal challenges including criminal proceedings;
- Failure to comply with regulatory guidance may result in action by the Scottish Housing Regulator;
- Service standards not being consistently applied may lead to customer dissatisfaction;
- Expenditure not properly managed may have implications for the budget and the Association's financial and business plans, and;
- Inadequate prioritisation of repairs may lead to death or potential injury, or further damage to properties.

18.2 The risks in relation to electrical installations are significant. The Association will take all reasonable steps to ensure that residents, employees, and

members of the public are not put at risk.

- 18.3 Given the importance of these risks the effective management of this policy is vital. By having a written electrical safety policy and procedure the Association is able to ensure that a consistent uniform and professional approach is adopted, and the service delivered is compliant with legislation and best practice.

## **19. Data Protection**

- 19.1 SHA handles the personal data we use in line with our obligations under data protection law and SHA's Privacy Policy and Data Retention Schedule. Information about how we handle personal data and the lawful basis for processing personal data is available through SHA's Fair Processing Notices.





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