



CARE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Implementation Date	January 2019
Created By	Mark Heywood (Asset & Compliance Manager)
Last Committee Review Date	April 2024
Next Review Due	April 2025 (Annual)

1. Introduction

Care Housing Association (Care) understands that staff, tenants and visitors (including contractors and members of the public) need to be as safe as possible from the threat of fire and as safe as possible from injury if there was a fire. The best way to ensure this is to have clear fire policies and procedures in place and to make sure that all staff are aware of how to react if a fire breaks out.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Care and provides guidance relating to Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) within Care's properties.

This policy takes into account the following legislation:

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, 2005
- The Fire Safety Act 2021
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999.
- Building Regulations 2010
- Building (Approved Inspectors, etc.) Regulations 2010

3. Aims and Objectives

This policy aims to ensure that Care has clear guidelines in place which minimise the risk of fire to anyone living in, working in or visiting properties owned or rented by Care.

This policy sets out the values, principles and guidelines underpinning Care's approach to fire safety. It aims to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that fires do not start, but if they do that they are rapidly detected and reacted to appropriately.

An awareness of and involvement in fire precautions is a basic, and legal duty of all staff.

The main objectives to achieving these aims are:

- To minimise the risk of fires by the use of adequate fire prevention, protection, detection and risk assessment techniques
- Advise all tenants in blocks of flats of the importance of fire doors and provide fire safety information to tenants regarding how to report a fire and what to do if a fire occurs in the building.
- To ensure that all staff receive, read and understand this policy.
- To ensure that, in the event of a fire, tenants' homes and Care's premises can be evacuated as quickly, safely and effectively as possible.

4. Fire Risk Assessments

4.1 Where the legal responsibility lies with the company, Care will appoint Fire Risk Assessors who have appropriate training and/or experience to conduct FRAs of properties. They will carry out the initial FRA at a property then, thereafter, a member of Care's Asset & Compliance Team will carry out a desktop review of all FRAs annually and all FRAs will be physically reviewed every two years or as recommended by the Fire Risk Assessor visiting the property. This is provided that nothing substantial has changed at the property or in respect of the needs of the tenants in the interim; if there are substantial changes to the building, such as an extension, or tenant ability to self-evacuate, then Care will carry out a physical FRA on completion of works we have arranged or on becoming aware of another relevant change.

4.2 Where an FRA identifies the need, properties will be fitted with smoke detectors, heat detectors, fire alarm panels, fire doors and any other equipment or systems deemed necessary. All fire safety equipment provided by Care will be tested in accordance with regulations and the results recorded.

4.3 Where support providers accept it, Care will provide a fire blanket in kitchens to assist in the event of a small, manageable fire. Care do not provide or maintain fire extinguishers in properties for the following reasons:

- Care recommends that support workers' first response in the event of fire in any our properties is to isolate the fire by ensuring the compartment door is closed, evacuate the residents and, if required by the Emergency Evacuation Action Plan, anyone else from the building, call the fire service, do not re-enter the building and await the arrival of the fire service
- We are not in a position to provide training to support workers to use fire extinguishers appropriately.
- If support providers wish to provide their own fire extinguishers, they are responsible for staff training and maintenance

4.4 Care will review new FRAs and ensure any actions are completed. Housing Officers will share a copy of new FRAs with the support provider and discuss any actions within a month of the assessment being carried out (see Appendix 1). Support providers are asked to make sure a hard copy of the latest FRA is available for reference in all of Care's properties.

4.5 Each property will also have an Emergency Evacuation Action Plan (EEAP), this plan will be site and tenant specific and will be used to inform all tenants, staff, visitors, contractors etc. of the actions to be taken in the event of a fire. The EEAP will not be carried out by Care, it will be carried out and maintained by the support provider who operates from the property. Care's tenants are encouraged to take an

active role in their own fire prevention measures, where possible, through the development of person-centred support plans and risk assessments.

4.6 The support provider has a legal obligation to cooperate and coordinate fire safety. Tenants also have certain obligations, in particular the following:

- The support provider will be responsible for ensuring their staff are adequately trained in fire safety and are familiar with the property's fire safety management procedures.
- The support provider will carry out and maintain the EEAP as well as personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs), where necessary, for each tenant.
- The support provider, where relevant, will ensure a system is in place to regularly test any fire equipment e.g. fire alarm systems, smoke vents, emergency lighting and smoke detectors, and keep sufficient records of this.
- The tenant, as supported by the support provider, will be responsible for controlling fire risks and hazards within the premises and ensuring the day-to-day matters specified in the premises FRA are observed e.g. keeping stairwells free from combustible materials, fire doors closed, monitoring storage and ignition sources.
- The tenant, as supported by the support provider, will be responsible for carrying out regular fire drills.

5. Offices and home working

Care will ensure that exits from its office premises are kept clear, fire exits are clearly signposted and staff are made aware of how to evacuate in the event of a fire.

Where staff work from home as standard or on occasion, they must complete a home working self-assessment which includes assessing fire safety in that location.

6. Monitoring

This policy will, in the first instance, be monitored by the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will review all serious incidents and this governance system will enable full discussion and the timely implementation of remedial actions where needed.

Advice and support will be given to tenants and support providers in respect of the follow up to any incidents. On a quarterly basis, all incidents will be reviewed at Board level.

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the event of any change in regulations or learning from any significant event.

APPENDIX 1 – Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) Review & Implementation Process

1. The FRA is received by Care's Contracts Manager who arranges any reasonable remedial works to be carried out and then forwards the FRA and the details of any remedial works to the Property Surveyor (PS) and the Housing Officer (HO).
2. The PS and HO read and discuss the contents of the FRA and:
 - Check for any errors or omissions.
 - Discuss any areas of confusion with the Fire Risk Assessor and/or the Asset and Compliance Manager.
 - The HO will ensure that any observations or recommendations associated with the management of the building raised by the Fire Risk Assessor are discussed with the Support Provider and a course of action agreed.
 - The PS will ensure that any reasonable recommended remedial works orders issued by the CM are completed.
 - The HO sends a copy of the FRA to the Support Provider.
 - The HO will discuss the FRA with an appropriate representative of the Support Provider (i.e. a manager or team leader) within one month of it being carried out. The HO will highlight the observations and recommendations made by the Fire Risk Assessor along with details of all works orders raised to address any physical remedial actions.
 - The HO will also discuss any management issues raised by the Fire Risk Assessor and asks the Support Provider to confirm they will complete any actions noted within their remit.
 - The HO updates the FRA to include the details of the agreed actions to be taken by the Support Provider to address the Fire Risk Assessor's observations and recommendations.
 - The HO and PS confirm that all actions are complete and that the Support Provider accepts the FRA as accurate.
3. When the required and recommended actions are complete:
 - The PS updates the FRA to include brief details of the remedial works that have been completed, in the Action Plan section of the FRA and forwards the complete updated FRA to the CEO for signing off.
 - The CEO reads the FRA and, if satisfied, returns the signed document to the PS. IF the CEO has any queries or require clarification on any points the CEO asks the PO and/or HO to respond and when satisfied signs the FRA off.
 - The PS saves a PDF copy of the FRA and saves it to the Fire Safety Management section of the Property Asset & Compliance Folder.
 - The PS send a copy of the PDF document to the HO who distributes it to the Support Provider.
 - The PS updates the Master Compliance Tracker Sheet with the date of the new FRA, the date when the annual review is to be completed by and date the FRA is to be completed by.