



## Policy Outline

### FIRE SAFETY POLICY January 2010

#### OVERALL PURPOSE

West North West homes Leeds Fire Safety policy outlines our approach to managing the fire risks associated with all our properties. It provides a link to the Asset Management Strategy and sets out our commitment to high quality service delivery with an aim of achieving sustainable communities, highly satisfied customers and value for money.

#### INTRODUCTION

West North West homes Leeds will ensure that:

We are committed and will provide safe environment for all Residents and Visitors within properties we manage.

West North West homes Leeds recognises and acknowledges its responsibility to take general precautions to protect the safety, so far as reasonably practicable, of its employees, customers and anyone else potentially affected by its undertaking against fire.

Through Service Level Agreements (SLA) with our partner contractors we will carry out programmed maintenance safety checks to all fire safety equipment and appliances managed by West North West homes.

Fire safety provides a key service to all of tenants and leaseholders within the ALMO area. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 was written in 2005 and came into force on 01 October 2006 and imposes a number of duties upon West North West homes Leeds.

The Regulations clarify the previous system of fire safety with an onus on fire risk assessment, they incorporate:

- WNWhL Local Offices
- Communal or common areas of Sheltered housing accommodation
- Multi Storey and Low Rise communal or common parts of a premises

The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order sets out a number of key requirements

including:

- Taking general fire precautions to ensure that relevant persons are safe in the event of a fire
- Carrying out a risk assessment, making and giving effect to fire safety arrangements and keeping certain records
- Taking measures for fire detection and providing fire fighting equipment
- Maintaining the premises, fire safety equipment and emergency routes and exits
- Appointing competent persons to help discharge these duties
- Providing safety training to employees
- Providing fire safety risk information to those occupiers and any other relevant persons.

In any one year period WNWhL has a legislative obligation to provide annual services to fire safety equipment, and in any five year period to carry out a fire risk assessment. WNWhL take the issue of fire safety extremely seriously, and therefore currently carry out the fire risk assessments on a 14 month cyclical programme.

West North West homes Leeds aims to provide a fire safety service that is

- Sensitive to the needs of the individual
- Efficient
- Responsive and flexible
- Accountable
- Fair
- Meets current legislation and Regulations

In order for us to achieve this we will ensure that the service meets the following criteria

- We will send a fully trained fire risk assessor to carry out fire risk assessments. All our representatives will always show official identification
- When we carry out servicing of equipment we will send a fully trained Engineer on the day and at the time agreed. All our Engineers will always wear corporate uniforms, show official identification, present themselves in a professional manner and treat you with courtesy and respect
- When a service is completed, the Engineer will always explain and or show that the equipment is working safely and leave the job in a neat and tidy condition. If it is not possible to complete the service and leave the equipment working safely, we will explain why and make another appointment before leaving.
- Engineers will comply with current Health & Safety legislation and relevant codes of practice
- We will make provisions for your individual needs e.g.) Disability, religion, faith. and gender
- Provide interpretation and translation services and BSL signers upon request
- We will consider other ways of communicating with our customers e.g. by text messaging or by email
- Ensure that written information can be made available in other formats upon

request

West North West homes Leeds will ensure that high quality customer care is delivered at all times ensuring we are committed to all our customers with the provision of feedback and performance information regularly, supporting all other related legislation, policy and procedures

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

We will monitor the implementation and delivery of services through this Policy through the following indicators;

Service standards -

- % of fire risk assessments carried out within a calendar month
- Quantity of significant findings within a calendar month
- % of emergency findings completed within 24 hours
- % of significant findings completed with 7 working days
- % of findings completed within 28 working days

Local Performance indicators -

- % of emergency lighting serviced on a monthly basis
- % of fire alarms serviced on a monthly basis
- % of dry risers serviced on a monthly basis
- % of sprinklers serviced on a monthly basis
- % of fire extinguishers serviced on a monthly basis
- Monitor service delivery in monthly progress meetings
- Number of complaints
- % of complaints responded to within 10 days
- Number of compliments

## Customer Service Policy

### 1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 WNWhL aims to deliver an effective and efficient fire safety strategy in line with the service standards agreed with our customers.

- 1.2 West North West homes Leeds are committed to comply with all legislation, approved codes of practice and all Health and Safety Executive Guidance Notes relevant to the fire safety across the whole range of its services.
- 1.4 Facilitate a coordinated approach to the fire Safety in all West North West homes Leeds assets. WNWhL Property Investment and the Contracts and Compliance team will manage the gathering of information relating to fire safety within buildings that it manages and occupies.

## 2.0 Outline of Service

- 2.1 The general repair duties of West North West homes Leeds are set out in the Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.

In general we must keep your home and communal areas in good condition. We will repair and maintain:

- The structure and exterior of the building - roofs, walls, floors, ceilings, window frames, external doors, drains, gutters, outside pipes.
  - Kitchen and bathroom fixtures - basins, sinks, toilets, baths.
  - Electrical wiring and gas and water pipes.
  - Heating equipment and water heating equipment.
  - Any communal areas around your home - stairs, lifts, landings, lighting
  - Paving, shared gardens, and rubbish chutes.
  - All equipment relating to fire safety
- A. We must complete breakdown repairs in a stated time. When you report a repair we will tell you when the work will be done by.
- B. We must clear up after the Servicing and Repair has been completed . We will leave your decoration as close as possible to how it was before the repair was done. However if redecoration is necessary we will offer a decoration voucher to contribute towards the cost of the work.
- C. We will undertake fire risk assessments highlighting significant findings, and ensure they are completed within the recommended timescales.

### 2.2 Home Visits

When visiting customers' homes in connection with fire safety WNWhL staff and its contractors will carry and show on request formal identification. If the person calling does not have identification, customers will be entitled to refuse access.

### 2.3 Fire Equipment Servicing and Repair

WNWhL Partners will try to ensure that servicing and repairs are completed in one visit to the customer's home wherever possible. If the servicing or repair cannot be completed in one visit we will agree an appointment to return and complete the work.

- WNWhL will ensure that adequate fire fighting equipment is installed in all communal premises and will be properly maintained, serviced or inspected in accordance with the British Standards, these include-
  - Fire extinguisher and blankets
  - Wet/Dry risers
  - Sprinkler systems
  - Hose reels
- WNWhL will ensure adequate fire alarm systems and Automatic fire detection systems are installed where legislation applies.
- Category L2 fire alarm systems, with automatic fire detection with detectors sited in escape routes, including rooms that open onto escape routes, and rooms or areas of high fire risk to occupants as detailed in BS5839-1, will be installed in all sheltered housing communal areas.
- All alarm systems will be clearly audible throughout the premises, visual or vibrating alarms will be provided to persons with disabilities, if necessary, through WNWhL or West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service.
- Individual dwellings in sheltered housing complexes shall be provided with smoke detection that is automatically connected to the Care ring intercom system, operated 365 days a year.
- The Care ring smoke detection in individual dwellings need not be connected to the communal fire alarm system.
- Adequate Emergency escape lighting will be installed to escape routes and stairwells, where necessary with illuminated signs to final fire exit.
- Adequate emergency signage installed to escape routes and stairwells.

#### 2.4 **Fire risk Assessments**

West North West homes Leeds will carry out a Fire Risk Assessment on all communal or common parts of a building, in line with the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005, on a fourteen monthly rolling programme to capture the different seasons, as greater risks may be identified during the summer months, also if the use or layout of the premises changes or has undergone any type of refurbishment.

- A key responsibility is to carry out a fire safety risk assessment. The essential elements of such an assessment are:
  - Identify fire hazards
  - Identify people at risk
  - Evaluate the risk
  - Remove, reduce and protect from the risk
  - Record the findings of the assessment and action taken

- Ensure an effective emergency plan is in place
  - Inform, instruct and train
  - Review the assessment
- The significant findings of the risk assessment will be properly recorded, addressed and suitable control measures implemented.
  - From the risk assessments an emergency plan will be created outlining procedures in the event of a fire. Also created will be an action plan that specifies tasks to be completed to comply with the risk assessment,
  - A management plan is also created outlining the measures on a daily, weekly, monthly and annual basis that need to be carried out to effectively manage fire safety within the premises.

## 2.5 Keeping Our Customers Informed Of Delays

If a repair or service requires parts or materials that must be ordered, the repair may not be completed within the timescale. In this case West North West homes Leeds or its contractor will inform the customer of the likely date for repair completion.

## 2.6 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive of WNWhL will be responsible for the compliance of the order with the Contract and Compliance Team ensuring the implementation, monitoring and review of the fire safety policy.

- WNWhL will provide a named fire safety officer to comply with legal requirements, co ordinate the Fire risk assessments identify the hazards and effectively manage the risks associated with premises.
- The Fire Risk Assessments are carried out by trained competent surveyors and validated by a qualified competent Person, using a PAS 79 Risk assessment, taking guidance from the order and HM Government sleeping Accommodation.
- WNWhL will ensure other departments will consult and seek guidance from the fire safety officer before any modification or alterations are carried out on premises, to prevent any breaches of the order. **See, fire safety precaution for contractors.**
- All contractors should agree to the Fire safety precautions, and operate a permit to work were hot works are carried out in multi storey buildings or sheltered housing complexes.

## 2.7 Previous Tenants Fixtures and Fittings

West North West homes Leeds may not be able to maintain items left by previous tenants and may remove them as an alternative to carrying out repairs. We will normally only maintain those fixtures and fittings installed by previous tenants that WNWhL has a responsibility or wish to provide, such as kitchen fittings, showers over baths, fixed space or water heating etc.

## 2.8 Documents

WNWhL will provide the following documentation;

- Gerda boxes for sheltered housing complexes, the purpose of the boxes is for storing fire documents, plans of the premises, keys and fobs making access and information readily and easily available for the fire service to access and inspect.
- WNWhL will provide a Fire safety log book, for all staff and contractors to record and log their service and inspection results, all certificates will be kept within the log book.
- WNWhL will provide a confidential vulnerable and disabled information log book, this will give brief details of a customer's disability, name and flat number, to identify persons who may need assistance in the event of a fire or evacuation,
- A PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) questionnaire will be sent to the identified customers, this will provide vital information to WNWhL to enable us to assess whether additional provisions or equipment may be necessary to assist in an evacuation in the event of a fire or emergency.
- WNWhL have a stay put policy for all multi storey buildings and sheltered housing complexes, fire procedures will be displayed in all communal areas, advising all persons to activate the nearest break glass call point or call 999 in the event of a fire, remain in their private dwellings closing doors behind them, a member of WNWhL or West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will advise and assist if an evacuation of the premises is necessary.

## 2.9 Leaseholders

leaseholders are not permitted to compromise the fire safety measures by replacing individual flat doors for inadequate fire resisting doors, which may affect the safety of persons within the building.

Leaseholders must request permission to alter the structure, subject to permission being granted, such permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

## 3.0 Specific Needs

- 3.1 West North West homes Leeds will take into account the specific needs, which may arise, of older, vulnerable, disabled people and black and minority ethnic groups, in a manner that promotes equality and inclusiveness ensuring all customers are treated equally and fairly taking into account race, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and religious belief.

## 4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation on the WNWhL fire safety policy has been undertaken at our Service improvement groups which involved contractors, and other key stakeholders such as customers. In addition further consultation has taken place with customers through the Compliance Customer Sounding Board, all amendments and additions have been incorporated within the policy.

## 5.0 Implementation

- 5.1 Members of West North West homes Leeds Board, the Chief Executive and Heads of Services are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- 5.2 It is the responsibility of all West North West homes Leeds' employees to ensure that their work is carried out in line with this policy and procedures relating to it.
- 5.3 We will introduce all the necessary information and procedures into all our training packages with staff. Planned and Cyclical management training will be a mandatory course for all new starters within the Property Group at WNWhL.

## 6.0 Monitoring

- 6.1 West North West homes Leeds will monitor and manage the contractor performance and customer and tenant satisfaction levels to ensure all client groups are being considered to assist West North West homes in the development of healthy neighbourhoods and communities
- 6.2 We will measure our performance of the fire safety service through best value, national and local performance indicators inline with our service standards
- 6.4 We will provide clear and accurate information on the overall service and unit costs and review cost effectiveness so that both value for money and business efficiencies can be achieved.

## 7.0 Review

- 7.1 In preparation for delivering this policy during 2010 West North West homes Leeds has reviewed and taken into account new or emerging government legislation and government and council policies.

As a result, this policy now fully reflects, and is inclusive of the issues arising from those policies and legislation, and considers the impacts arising.

We will review and monitor both the performance customer satisfaction against policy and procedures. We will also review this policy in conjunction with our customers periodically to keep up to date with legislation and policy

## 8.0 Legislation

8.1 New or emerging legislation and new policy for 2010 include:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Asset Management Strategy
- Duty of Repair - Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.
- Tenant Support Policy
- Vulnerability Policy and Strategy
- Customer Care Strategy
- Complaints/Compliments Policy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Cohesion and Diversity Strategy
- Financial Strategy
- Access to Services Strategy
- Customer Involvement Strategy

