

Fire Safety Management Policy

Policy Statement

Purpose

As owners and managers of property we have a duty of care to ensure that customers, visitors and colleagues can use our buildings and facilities safely. The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines and responsibilities for fire safety and electrical maintenance within our properties, including those involving third parties (such as managing agents). It ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Through this comprehensive fire safety management policy we will ensure the safety and wellbeing of our colleagues, visitors, and assets, working consistently to minimise the risk of fire incidents and protect lives and property.

Legal Obligations

We will comply with our duties for repairs and maintenance as set out in the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Housing Acts 1985 and 1988 (as amended). In addition, we will comply with:

- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (commencement date 23 January 2023), supplemented by The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended)
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Orwell Commitment

We will uphold the highest standards of fire safety and electrical maintenance within our properties, including those involving third parties. By ensuring compliance with the relevant UK regulations and implementing this policy, we aim to create a safe and secure environment for all customers and colleagues. We will ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, and Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

By providing comprehensive fire safety training to all employees, contractors, and visitors, and ensuring they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to prevent, respond to, and evacuate safely in the event of a fire emergency. We will proactively identify and address potential fire hazards within our premises, including regular inspections, maintenance, and adherence to fire safety codes and regulations.

We will develop and regularly update emergency response plans, including evacuation procedures, communication protocols, and designated assembly points, to ensure a swift and organized response in case of a fire incident.

We will install and maintain modern fire detection and, where required, suppression systems, including smoke detectors, fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and sprinkler systems. All fire safety equipment will be regularly tested, inspected, and maintained to ensure their proper functioning and reliability.

We will regularly review and evaluate our fire safety management policy, procedures, and practices to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes to enhance our fire safety measures.

We will comply with all applicable fire safety laws, regulations, and industry standards, and work closely with relevant authorities to ensure our fire safety management policy aligns with the best practice.

We will foster a culture of fire safety awareness by promoting open communication, encouraging reporting of potential fire hazards, and providing regular updates and reminders on fire safety practices.

We will appoint competent contractors for fire alarms, electrical lighting, and fire extinguisher maintenance and monitor and review their performance to ensure compliance with the relevant regulations.

We will store and maintain records of certifications and evidence in accordance with legal requirements and report compliance levels including any areas of note, including non-compliance to our Board.

We will monitor any actions arising from Fire Risk Assessments through to completion and report on these regularly through our internal management chains and to our Board. We will report to the Board on all compliance matters.

We will ensure that all third-party arrangements remain compliant with their legal obligations in relation to fire safety and store evidence and documentation. We will update software systems to ensure good record keeping.

We will audit the process from time to time to ensure best practice. Where identified actions are identified we will swiftly undertake remedial actions.

We will inspect General needs properties every five years in line with Hard Wire Checking Frequencies and fire alarm and smoke detectors will be replaced as required.

We will undertake testing in line with the time periods as outlined at Appendix 2.

The Assistant Director of Property & Construction has overall responsibility for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that this policy is complied with.

We will review this policy every three years, or sooner if deemed appropriate, if necessitated by a change in law/regulations or by reasonable request.

Lines of Responsibility

Orwell's duty to maintain and implement the Fire Safety Management Policy falls under the remit of the Compliance & Planned Works Manager. The Compliance & Planned Works Manager is the named Responsible Manager and will implement the control measures as detailed in this document reporting to the Head of Property, who will cascade all information to the responsible person and duty holder.

Duty Holder

The Duty Holder has a responsibility to support this policy by ensuring the allocation of resources including an adequate budget, suitable and sufficient equipment, personnel, time, and training.

In particular they will:

- Ensure that resources are made available to allow the actions and measures detailed in this policy and any associated procedures to be effectively delivered.
- Delegate their responsibilities for the delivery of services in line with policy and procedures to the Assistant Director of Property Services, the Head of Property and the Compliance & Planned Works Manager, however, will retain an oversight on progress/performance.
- Eliminate Risk wherever possible.
- Appoint appropriate 'Responsible Persons' to oversee, control and coordinate the control of the risk.

The Duty Holder is: Director of Customers & Communities.

Responsible Person

The Responsible Person has been given their authority by the Duty Holder. The position carries with it the authority to put into effect such measures as are required to control the risk and ensure statutory and regulatory regulations implemented and followed both as a matter of routine and in the event of a crisis.

The Responsible Person will work closely with the Head of Property and the Compliance & Planned Works Manager to seek assurances that regulatory obligations and policy measures are being adhered to and services delivered in line with budget. They will check monthly reports compiled for board members to ensure compliance with statutory and contractual obligations.

The Responsible Person also has a responsibility to ensure records are kept to confirm that this policy has been implemented. The Responsible Person has the overriding authority for the control of Fire Safety to ensure that all Orwell Housing Association properties meet the requirements of Fire Safety and this policy. The Responsible Person is required to ensure that nominated OHA staff are trained and competent to carry out the prescribed task on their behalf and to ensure that the Responsible Person tasks and requirements are duly met and regularly reviewing this policy and ensure its objective are achieved.

The Responsible Person is: Assistant Director of Property Services.

Responsible Manager

The Responsible Manager has been given their authority by the “Responsible Person” to act on their behalf to oversee the day-to-day management of Fire Safety for Orwell. This person has responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the Fire Safety Policy and Procedure. This position carries with it the authority to put into effect such measures as are required to control the risk of Fire Safety, both as a matter of routine and in the event of a crisis. The Responsible Manager also has a responsibility to ensure records are kept to confirm that this policy has been implemented.

They have the responsibility for the day-to-day management including ensuring that the scheme of precautions to control the risk of Fire Safety is implemented fully by competent persons, whether directly employed by Orwell, contracted, or subcontracted.

In particular they will:

- Prepare compliance performance reporting to the Assistant Director of Property Services, the Construction, the Head of Property, Chief Executive, and the Board, as required.
- Ensure that any compliance and/or H&S related issues are brought to the attention of the Assistant Director of Property Services, the Head of Property and provide regular updates on service delivery.
- Effectively manage the performance of the service delivery contractors, including their ongoing competence, and proactively monitor service delivery against targets.
- Be responsible for monitoring the quality of work undertaken by the contractor and ensuring all servicing certification is received and verified.
- Act as the organisation lead for Fire Safety, ensuring that OHA continue to work in line with the most up to date regulations and industry guidance.
- Manage the performance of Fire Safety contractors, supported by a suite of internal metrics and KPI dashboards.
- Hold monthly Operational Meetings with contractors, within which performance is discussed and documented, with procedures in place to take more formal action to address performance issues, if required.
- Oversee the control and management of Fire Safety Regulation on behalf of the Duty Holder.
- Ensure that Fire Safety checks are carried out on behalf of the Duty Holder.

The Responsible Manager: Compliance & Planned Works Manager.

Compliance & Servicing Team Leader

Compliance & Servicing Team Leader will be responsible for the day-to-day operational delivery of all Fire Safety and Electrical Lighting servicing and maintenance.

In particular they will:

- Be responsible for monitoring the quality of work undertaken by the contractor and ensuring all servicing certification is received and verified.
- Ensure the Compliance Team maintain a register of all Fire Safety engineers carrying out works for Orwell. This will include the specific qualifications of the engineers and the expiration date. Processes will be in place to ensure that the register is kept up to date, e.g., new engineers are added, and that evidence is obtained of renewed qualifications.
- Carry out on an annual basis a full property reconciliation will be carried out. This will reconcile the information within Cx against Asprey Asset Management System to

ensure all applicable building and properties remain captured in the relevant servicing schedule.

- Inform the Responsible Manager of any problems, discrepancies, or anomalies.

Fire Safety Contractor

The contractor has responsibility for carrying out the servicing and maintenance of all properties as instructed by Orwell.

In particular they will:

- Organise initial appointments with schemes to ensure that the servicing is completed in the necessary timeframes to ensure Orwell comply with the Fire Safety Regulations.
- Provide delivery reports updates in line with the delivery schedule to the Compliance Team on current position with all properties and notify of any problems, discrepancies or anomalies.
- Ensure that all engineers have the correct qualifications and memberships to work on the various system to be serviced.
- Complete and maintain records as required.
- Attend monthly contract meeting to discuss and document performance of the contract.

Appendix 1 – Testing Frequency – (Frequency May Vary In Line with the Property Risk)

Equipment/ Procedure	Frequency	Comments
Fire Extinguishers	Monthly	Ensure that all extinguishers are in their proper position, unobstructed, have not been operated or lost pressure (where fitted with pressure indicator), and tamper indicators are in place. Operating instructions should be clean, legible, and facing forward. (Scheme / OHA)
	Annually	To be completed by a competent person following the manufacturers recommended procedures. A certificate of inspection should be provided. (Contractor)
	Extended Service	A discharge test (or overhaul as required) to be completed by a competent person at intervals not exceeding those laid down in BS5306 Part 3 (varies depending on extinguisher type). (Contractor)
Fire Alarm System	Daily	Inspect the panel daily for normal operation of the system. Where visual indication is provided, check that the connection to the remote call receiving centre is functioning correctly. (Scheme / OHA)
	Weekly	Test the system weekly to ensure that it is capable of operating under alarm conditions. This can be done by operating a manual call point during normal working hours, at about the same time each week, to prove the control equipment is working, the fire alarm sounders operate, and a signal is received by the alarm receiving centre where appropriate. Ensure that a different call point is used each week until all call points have been tested. The test should last no more than one minute. (Scheme / OHA)
	Bi-Annually Or Quarterly	The installation should be inspected at least every six months by a competent person. (Contractor)
Automatic Door Release Mechanisms (Activated by the Fire Alarm System)	Weekly & Quarterly	In conjunction with the fire alarm test – check all doors are being released and closing fully onto the door rebates. (Scheme / OHA) Contractor

Equipment/ Procedure	Frequency	Comments
Emergency Lighting	Monthly	Self-contained luminaires should be checked monthly by a competent person able to simulate a failure of the normal lighting supply for sufficient time to allow all luminaires to be tested for proper function. (Scheme OHA or Contractor)
	Annually	A full functional test of self-contained and central battery systems by simulation of a failure of the normal lighting supply, for a continuous period, for its full duration should be completed by a competent person. (Contractor)
Automatic Opening Vent (AOV)	6 Monthly	AOV's and electrically operated OV's should be tested on a six-monthly basis using the manual controls to ensure satisfactory operation. (Contractor)
	Annually	Once a year, a full test should be performed which includes checking the functionality of smoke detectors and AOV controls. (Contractor)
Fire Evacuation Drill	Bi-Annually	Complete a full fire evacuation drill. Record the results and any findings and/or actions required. (Scheme / OHA)

