

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

Date Issued	26 March 2026
Last Reviewed	n/a
Department	Asset Management
Title	Fire Safety in Housing Stock and Common Areas
Objective	To provide a robust fire safety framework
Responsible	Director of R3 & Asset Management
Next Review Date	March 2031

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 We have in place a robust fire safety framework which can be implemented in the event of a fire, to secure the safety and wellbeing of tenants, visitors and firefighters.
- 1.2 The procedures detailed within this policy are intended to facilitate the effective management of fire safety, ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to comply with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and all other relevant legislation.

2.0 Legal and Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 We will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations including the following (the list is not exhaustive):
 - BS 5839-6:2019+A1:2020
 - Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
 - Domestic Technical Handbook (as revised)
 - Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
 - Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
 - Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
 - Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
 - Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

- Scottish Government Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Existing High-Rise Domestic Buildings

2.2 This policy also takes account of the following policies and procedures:

- Maintenance Policy
- Empty Homes Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Chargeable Repairs Policy
- Mutual Repairs Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Tenant Participation Strategy
- Communication Strategy
- Customer Care Policy and Procedure
- Health & Safety at Work Policy

3.0 Objectives of Fire Safety

3.1 The objective of this policy is to prevent fires starting, ensure safe and rapid escape routes for all tenants, contractors and staff, enable early detection and suppression of fires and limit damage to property.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 **Common Area** – A common area is a portion of a property that is shared and used by multiple residents. This includes areas such as the entrance area, stairway and hallway.

Compartmentation – subdivision of a building by fire-resisting walls and/or floors for the purpose of limiting fire spread within the building.

Competent Person – a person, suitably trained and qualified by knowledge and practical experience, and provided with the necessary instructions, to enable the required task(s) to be carried out correctly.

Dwelling – a house, flat, or other place of residence.

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

Emergency Lighting – lighting provided for use when the supply to normal lighting fails.

Fire Door – a door or shutter provided for the passage of people, air or objects which, together with its frame and furniture as installed in a building, is intended (when closed) to resist the passage of fire and/or gaseous products of combustion, and is capable of meeting specified performance criteria to those ends.

Smoke Alarm – device containing, within one housing, all the components, necessary for detecting smoke and for giving an audible alarm.

Sprinkler System – a system comprising thermosensitive devices designed to react at a pre-determined temperature to automatically release a stream of water and distribute it in a specified pattern and quantity over a designated area.

HMO – a house, premises or a group of premises with shared amenities, occupied by three or more persons from three or more families as their only or main residence.

5.0 Periodic Inspection and Testing

5.1 Fire and Smoke alarms

We will provide:

- one functioning smoke alarm in the room which is frequently used by the occupants for general daytime living purposes
- one functioning smoke alarm in every circulation space, such as hallways and landings
- one heat alarm in every kitchen

5.2 All alarms will be interlinked, either mains powered or using sealed battery alarms, and provided with an integral stand-by power supply (a minimum of class D).

5.3 We will ensure that fire and smoke alarms are in proper working order at the start of each tenancy, and have a cyclical programme to replace these prior to the expiry date. Alarms have a 10 year lifespan.

5.4 We will ensure that all smoke alarms are installed in accordance with the recommendations contained in BS EN14604:2005 and heat alarms comply with BS 5446-2:2003.

5.5 We will advise tenants to test alarms on a weekly basis, and report any repairs required to us immediately.

5.6 Sharing Owners are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Standard set out at Section 5.4 above.

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

NB: The Nest Protect System will not be sufficient to comply with the relevant standards and, as such, will not be used.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- 5.7 Carbon monoxide alarms will be installed in any room containing a fossil fuel burning appliance. They will comply with British Kitemark EN 50291-1:2018.

Emergency Lighting

- 5.8 Emergency lighting will be present in all communal areas and common escape routes in our blocks of flats. Where the emergency lighting provision is under the control of a third party (e.g. East Lothian Council), we will take all reasonable steps to communicate with the third party in an attempt to ensure compliance with the following.

- The emergency lighting system will be designed to automatically illuminate upon the failure of the power supply
- We will test the emergency lighting monthly and maintain a record of the testing for 3 years
- A competent person will perform an annual discharge test, this will involve simulating a power failure and conducting a test of the full rated duration of the emergency lights (e.g. 3 hours)

- 5.9 We advise tenants to report any faults or failures to us promptly.

Fire Doors and Compartmentation

- 5.10 Buildings containing flats and maisonettes will be split into fire-resisting compartments by fire-resisting doors, walls and floors which will provide a physical barrier to fire.
- 5.11 Doors connecting shared parts of a multi-occupancy dwelling, such as the doors to individual flats or apartments will be rated fire doors.
- 5.12 For homes with an integral garage, the door that joins the garage to the main part of the house will be a fire door.
- 5.13 Doors used for plant rooms and service penetrations such as rubbish chutes will be fire rated.

Emergency Exit Doors

- 5.14 We will ensure all doors which are to be used in an emergency can be opened from the inside without the use of a key and be clearly marked.

Smoke Ventilation

- 5.15 Communal areas will have adequate smoke ventilation either through natural means or by mechanical ventilation.

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

5.16 Any ventilation ducts supplying or removing air from a protected stairway or entrance hall will not serve any other areas.

5.17 All buildings will have adequate means for venting heat and smoke from a fire in the basement.

Fire Equipment

5.18 We will install sprinklers where we are unable to reduce particular risks by other means.

5.19 We will not install fire extinguishers in dwellings as tenants will not be trained on the safe use of extinguishers. Accidents can occur if tenants try to use them in the event of a fire or if they are discharged through malice or horseplay.

5.20 To assist the Fire and Rescue Service:

- Dry risers will be installed in any building that is over 18 metres in height
- Wet risers will be installed in buildings over 50 metres in height
- Outlets will be present on each floor and located in a fire escape staircase or similar protected location

5.21 We will visually inspect both dry and wet risers every 6 months and record the inspection.

5.22 A competent person will pressure test both dry and wet risers every year and record the test.

6.0 Evacuation Procedures

6.1 Fire evacuation procedures and fire assembly points will be clearly contained within the My New Home Process will be issued to all tenants at the start of a tenancy.

6.2 Alternative methods will be available for tenants with language or learning difficulties.

7.0 Signage

7.1 We will place fire action signs in corridors (on every level), entrance doors and common areas (where fire safety signs are provided, they will be in accordance with BS 5499 and the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996).

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

8.0 Maintenance and Repairs

8.1 We will:

- Ensure premises, equipment and devices provided for fire safety are subject to a suitable system of maintenance, are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair
- Carry out all repairs within the timescales set out in our Maintenance Policy and completed by a competent person
- Maintain clear records of the processes in place and actions carried out

9.0 Access and Facilities for the Fire Service

9.1 We will ensure:

- there is sufficient means of external access to enable fire appliances to be brought near to the building for effective use
- there is sufficient means of access into, and within, the building for firefighting personnel to effect search and rescue and fight fire; and that
- the building is provided with sufficient internal fire mains and other facilities to assist firefighters in their tasks

10.0 Fire Risk Assessment

10.1 The legal requirements relating to Fire Risk Assessing are complex and are often taken to exclude domestic premises. However, we have a legal duty to risk assess all areas defined as 'workplaces', which will include plant rooms and other non-tenant-accessible areas. Furthermore, the fire regulations require common areas to be maintained in a certain condition suitable for the fire authority, which can often only be ensured by carrying out a risk assessment.

We will devise a Fire Risk Assessment Strategy and arrange for the undertaking of fire risk assessments (and regular reviews) by competent consultants in accordance with the Strategy.

The following will be considered in developing the Fire Risk Assessment Strategy:

- Fire Risk Assessments will be carried out by a competent, qualified Fire Risk Assessor
- 'Workplaces' such as plant rooms come within the scope of the regulations so far as fire risk assessing is required

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

- Common areas of domestic premises require to be maintained in a certain condition and may benefit from a 'representative' risk assessing programme
- Particular risks may be posed by external wall systems (recognising that specialised intrusive inspection and fire performance testing may be required in some circumstances)

11.0 Tenant Responsibilities and Communication

11.1 We will include fire safety obligations within elha.com and will issue regular fire safety information packs, we are working to develop printable web pages to remind tenants to:

- Test smoke alarms on a weekly basis
- Ensure all communal areas are not obstructed
- Ensure fire doors are not propped open or otherwise disabled
- Tenants to report any faults or failures promptly

11.2 Tenants will be provided with information on the fire detection system and evacuation procedures / assembly points

11.3 Front doors cannot be changed without our express permission; an alteration request is required to be submitted for this to be considered

11.4 Communication methods will take account of tenants with language or learning difficulties (e.g. braille, audio, different language, etc.)

12.0 Licensed Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) and workshop premises

12.1 All requirements listed above will be applied. In addition to this, all licensed HMOs and workshop premises managed by the ELHA:

- Will be fire risk assessed by a competent assessor, with periodicity determined by the fire risk assessment
- Will have doors opening in the direction of escape
- Will be supplied with appropriate, maintained extinguishers
- Will have the fire evacuation procedure details relayed to relevant persons.

Approve by ELHA Board 26/03/26

- Within workshop premises not managed by ELHA, the responsibility for the completion of the fire risk assessment will fall upon the tenant (a copy of the completed fire risk assessment will be held by both the tenant and ELHA)

13.0 Documentation and Reporting

13.1 We maintain accurate records of all servicing reports and Fire Risk Assessments of communal areas.

13.2 The Asset Manager will submit reports on the performance of Fire Safety to the Health & Safety Committee. The reports will include performance against set targets or standards, progress on compliance safety inspections and expenditure compared with budget.

14.0 Monitoring and Review

14.1 Director of R3 & Asset Management is responsible for ensuring that all staff involved comply with this policy and the supporting procedures.

15.0 Policy Review

15.1 The Director of R3 & Asset Management will review this policy every five years or sooner if required by changes in legislation or organisational practise. Any minor changes will be approved by the Senior Management Team, whilst any material changes will be submitted to the ELHA Board for approval.