

**Aire Valley Homes Leeds Limited  
East North East Homes Leeds Limited  
West North West homes Limited**

# **Fire Safety Policy - Key points**



**ALMO Business Centre Leeds**

**Navigation House**

**Leeds**

**LS10 1DJ**

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## **FIRE SAFETY POLICY Summary**

### **Section 1**

#### **1.0 Policy Statement**

Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd are committed to taking all reasonable steps to protect our team members, visitors, residents, guests and contractors and those in the vicinity of our premises from the effects of fire. In doing so we will concentrate on fire prevention measures designed to eliminate or reduce fire hazards in our premises, thereby reducing the likelihood of a fire occurring and indeed the impact of any fire should one occur.

The likelihood of fire can, however, never be totally removed. We will, therefore, also ensure that we are vigilant and have suitable fire protection measures in place, to afford all residents, guests and contractors in our buildings sufficient time to safely evacuate the premises or in the case of rented housing accommodation sufficient protective measures to safeguard them in the event of a fire.

We will take all practical steps to ensure that our management teams are provided with the necessary support to effectively manage fire safety in the premises under their control. We will also provide the assistance and training necessary for all team members to competently fulfil their fire safety duties and responsibilities.

We will aim to comply with the "Concordat", a procedural document to deal with risk within high rise flats, agreed with the enforcing authority, West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service.

At a corporate level we will work within the guidelines set by Leeds City Council Fire and Safety Manager and the Leeds City Council Concordat with West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service.

By means of the above measures, we will endeavour to ensure the fire hazards in our buildings are no greater than would normally be expected and that the risks to life from fire are reduced to a tolerable level in a pragmatic and incremental approach.

In return we expect all team members to contribute and comply with our fire safety procedures. You must ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that you take care of your own safety, your colleagues' safety and that of anyone affected by what you do or fail to do at work. In addition, you must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of fire safety.

The responsibility for implementing the fire safety policy lies with all Directors, Managers and Team Members. We expect them to plan and organise safe systems of work, maintain records and regularly review Fire Safety performance in line with our commitment to compliance with fire safety legislation. These actions will enable us to reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring and minimise the effects in the event that one does.

Fire Safety is, therefore, of paramount importance and, as a minimum, we aim to comply with legislative requirements and the British Standards relating to Fire Safety.

### **Section 2**

#### **2.0 Purpose**

2.1 Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd have a duty to achieve compliance with the following legislation;

- The Health and Safety at Work Act Etc. 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Building Regulations 2000 Approved Document B as amended
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Health and Safety( Safety Signs and Signals ) Regulations 1996

- 2.1.1 Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd will maintain an environment safe from fire by identifying the hazards and reducing the risk in the following areas to a minimum, within it duties:

**As an employer**

- Within any workplace used by employees of Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd

**As a Management Agent**

- Within Communal areas and dwellings of Sheltered housing accommodation
- High and low rise communal areas of the premises,
- To offer and provide fire safety advice for safety in the home
- To maintain a policy of installation and maintenance of smoke detection in the home to a standard in line with national guidance
- To offer and provide fire safety advice to tenants of commercially let properties

### **Section 3**

#### **3.0 SCOPE**

- 3.1 This procedure applies to all employees. Although the final level of responsibility for implementing the policy rests with management, every employee must take an active role in effectively implementing the policy.

The full policy is available for viewing on the intranet and hard copies will be available to site staff and other staff who do not have intranet access on request to their line Manager.

- 3.1.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (Fire Safety Order) replaces previous fire safety legislation. In order to comply Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd will:

- Provide buildings in which fire precautions appropriate for their use are taken into account during design and construction.
- Provide and maintain fire detection; alarm systems; emergency lighting; fire fighting equipment; evacuation signage; means of escape; and protected escape routes.
- Ensure competent persons, who have sufficient knowledge and training, are available to implement its fire safety procedures.
- Carry out suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments of all premises to assess the risk to relevant persons from fire and to evaluate the adequacy of the protection measures and compliance with all relevant legislation
- Train management and staff in relevant fire safety procedures and safe working practices and procedures relevant to this policy.
- Periodically test monitor audit and review all procedures, fire prevention and protection measures and systems.

### **Section 4**

#### **4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4.1 Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd as the employers are ultimately responsible in law for:

- The fire safety of their employees whilst at work;
- The conduct of the ALMO's undertakings, to ensure the fire safety of the public and other persons not in their employment;

- 4.1.1 To meet these responsibilities Aire Valley Homes Ltd, East North East Homes Ltd and West North West Homes Ltd will ensure that:

- There is an effective overall policy for the fire safety of employees and other persons who may be affected by the ALMO's undertaking and that adequate funds are available to meet fire safety requirements;
- Any necessary changes are made to the ALMO's fire safety policy;
- The ALMO is organised and has sufficient numbers of competent staff to meet its responsibility for fire safety.

4.1.2 Any person holding fire safety responsibilities is expected to familiarise themselves with the relevant legislation and supporting guidance or to seek the relevant training or information as required enabling them to carry out their duties.

**The day to day responsibilities for fire safety matters are delegated as follows:**

#### 4.1.3 Chief Executive – the Body Corporate

4.1.4 Within the Fire Safety Order there is reference to the 'Responsible Person'.

The Responsible Person will be responsible not only for the safety of employees, but for that of any person lawfully on the premises or in the immediate vicinity of the premises and at risk from a fire on the premises. In a workplace the employer is the Responsible Person if the workplace is under the employer's control. The Chief Executive has on behalf of the appropriate ALMO the ultimate responsibility for the safety of employees even where others have obligations in respect of premises in so far as:

- To take such general fire precautions as will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of his employees;
- In relation to relevant persons who are not employees, take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances;
- Establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons;
- Arrange for fire safety matters to be discussed by the Corporate Management Team;
- Ensure arrangements are made for joint consultation of all employees;
- Ensure that sufficient numbers of competent staff are appointed to assist in meeting fire safety responsibilities;
- Ensure that the Senior Emergency and Safety Management Team periodically consider and review all significant fire safety issues and developments.

#### 4.2 Heads of Departments/Directors

4.2.1 Are responsible for ensuring that the discharge of the fire safety function on behalf of the Chief Executive as it affects each of their directorates/departments, together with the training, administration and day to day working requirements, justify the need for delegation to personnel under their control. For this purpose, Heads of Departments/Directors are responsible to the Strategic Director for all matters relating to fire safety within their service unit and is achieved by the following:

- Implement and administer throughout their directorate all legislation and policy decisions concerning fire safety, and to ensure that employees at all levels are aware of their responsibilities;
- Corporate fire safety arrangements, regulations, information, instructions guidance and safe working arrangements (systems of work) are where necessary to safeguard against the risk of fire are disseminated to those employees for whom they are responsible;
- Ensure that adequate fire safety information, instruction and training is provided to all employees within their directorate;
- Requisition for sufficient funds to meet the foreseeable fire safety requirements of their directorate;

- Written records are made and kept for all fire safety arrangements;
- Arrangements are made for joint consultation with all employees;
- Ensure that “Local” Responsible Persons are nominated who are responsible for fire safety management within their workplace or work area;
- Ensure that fire risk assessments are carried out in premises within their Directorate including premises that the ALMO does not own but at which any employees under their control work
- Maintain fire safety when reorganising workplaces, changing systems of work or introducing new plant or machinery;
- Ensure that the fire safety responsibilities of their Managers are carried out;
- Identify the fire safety training requirements for employees and ensure that employees are competent in the fire safety aspects of the work they are required to undertake;

Ensure that where required a sufficient number of Fire Wardens are appointed for buildings or service areas liaising with other service units (in multi-functional buildings).

#### **4.3 Managers/Team Leaders/Heads of Department**

4.3.1 Managers are responsible to their Directors for all matters relating to fire safety within the buildings or service units in which they have control. This will be achieved by:

- Corporate fire safety arrangements, instructions and guidance are practised and information relating to regulations and codes of practice are disseminated to those employees for whom they are responsible;
- Employees under their control comply with safe working arrangements and systems of work as they relate to fire safety;
- Suitable and sufficient fire safety information, instruction, training and supervision are provided for all employees in their section or building;
- Liaise with the Emergency and Safety Team to ensure that additional fire safety training is provided for the appointed Fire Wardens within their areas of responsibility in order for them to carry out their roles;
- All new employees attend a health & safety induction course that covers basic fire safety procedures and refresher training is carried out periodically;
- To maintain and update their own skills, information and knowledge relating to fire safety matters;
- Plant, machinery and equipment used at work as it relates to fire safety, is safe, maintained in good working order, used in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and inspection and maintenance records kept;
- Adequate training or supervision is available at all times where necessary, especially where young people and lone workers are involved.
- Managers are responsible for the maintenance of ALMO properties and ensuring that buildings are safe working environments meeting health and fire safety requirements.
- Managers will provide advice and support and guidance to local responsible persons for any part of the premise for which they have any control over the building management.

#### **4.4 Employees**

4.4.1 All employees will:

- Act in accordance with all fire safety procedures, safe systems of work or instructions that have been initiated by management for their health and safety;

- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of fire safety;
- Not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk from fire;
- Report without delay to their line Manager any defects or concerns regarding fire safety including hazards, maintenance issues, general fire precautions or any preventative or protective measures in place to reduce the risk to employees from fire;
- Participate fully in fire safety training, as agreed with their Manager;
- Co-operate in undertaking fire drills and evacuation;

Inform line Managers of any disability that may impact on their safe egress from premises in the event of an emergency situation

#### 4.5 **Safety Representatives**

4.5.1 In addition to their general duties as employees, safety representatives have fire safety responsibilities to their members:

- Promote co-operation between management and employees and monitor the local arrangements for affecting the authority's fire safety policy;
- Make periodic inspections of selected areas of the authority's work places and equipment in the interest of fire safety in conjunction with management and/or The Emergency and Safety Team.

#### 4.6 **ABCL Fire Safety Team**

4.6.1 The ABCL Fire Safety Team will have the following responsibilities:

- Provide advice and assistance as the Company's competent persons, on fire safety matters to enable management to meet their statutory obligations and ensure consistent application of the fire safety policy;
- Provide an appropriate enforcement role, when a discernible breach of fire safety legislation or non-compliance of any corporate fire safety procedures is apparent. The Fire Safety Team will inform the responsible Team Leader of the problem and advise the appropriate action/s to resolve the issue
- The maintenance, amendment and distribution of the fire safety policy and supporting documents;
- Advise and assist management to fulfil their responsibilities for the fire safety of employees and others affected by their actions
- Advise on the design and implementation of safe systems of work, selection, provision and use of appropriate fire safety equipment and safety aspects in the design and use of plant and equipment;
- Promote fire safety training for all employees in collaboration with all Heads of Staff, Directors of Organisation, and Team Leaders;
- Promote where necessary, fire safety training for all Fire Wardens liaising with health and safety training teams;
- Liaise with statutory bodies such as The Health and Safety Executive and the Fire Service as necessary;
- Carry out an initial fire risk assessment:

With regards a place of work the assessment will be reviewed in line with schedule of assessments document, to ensure that the provisions required by the legislation are being maintained

A review shall also be requested by Managers if there is a major change in the working conditions or layout of the premise.

With regards communal areas within high rise flats and sheltered accommodation the assessment will be reviewed in line with schedule of assessments document

With regards low rise (up to three floors) will be reviewed in line with the schedule of assessments

The Fire Safety Team will draw to the attention of the appropriate Head of Service concerns as to any unsafe working practices, procedures, plant or any breach of legislation concerning fire safety and wherever possible, advising on remedial action;

- Assist Managers, through on site visits where appropriate, to ensure that contractors comply with all fire safety considerations and other relevant requirements affecting their undertakings on behalf of the Company;
- Promote a positive fire safety culture in conjunction with line management, encouraging fire safety consciousness at all levels within the organisation;
- The ALMO's safety officers are authorised to enter any place of work owned, occupied or controlled by the ALMO, or any site or work place occupied by a contractor employed by the ALMO, and there, order the immediate stoppage of work where there is serious fire risk, whether they are employed by the ALMO or not.

## Section 5

### 5.0 Schedule of inspections By Fire Safety Team

Premise occupied by Aire Valley Homes, East North East Homes and West North West Homes shall have an initial Fire Safety Risk assessment then reviewed on the basis of risk, as indicated in the table below:

Schedule of inspections By Fire Safety Team	Time scale after initial assessment in Months	Risk Rating
High Rise Multi Storey Flats 4 Storeys and above	14	High
Low rise Flats up to three storey and Converted Houses with Communal areas	36 - 60	Low
High Rise Sheltered Housing	14	High
Community Centres	14	High
Offices or workplace	12	High
Following an instance of fire affecting communal areas of Flats	Immediate review	High
Following an instance of fire affecting any office or workplace	Immediate review	High

Table 1 Schedule of inspections by Fire Safety Team

## Section 6

### 6.1 Clear Area Policy (Zero Tolerance) to Fire Risk Approach and Managed Use Approach - Guidance for common areas policy - Do's and Don'ts

#### 6.2 Definitions:

**Clear Area Policy (Zero Tolerance):** Residents are not permitted to use the common parts to store or dispose of their belongings or rubbish. No exceptions will apply.

**Managed Use Approach:** A managed approach gives housing providers the ability to make local decisions as to whether residents are allowed to keep or store personal belongings in common areas. (For a full description see appendix 7 of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures)

The nature of items found in the common parts of blocks of flats can vary widely. The actual potential for significant smoke production and fire development when combustible materials are ignited varies enormously, depending on the inherent properties of the material. This includes its ease of ignition, the quantity present and its configuration. Not all of the items commonly found are either easily ignitable or likely to give rise to a serious risk if ignited in isolation.

This suggests that it might be possible to allow some items to be present without unduly exposing residents to risk.

Unrestricted use of common parts is clearly not acceptable. It will, therefore, be necessary to adopt one of the following alternatives:

- i. **‘Clear Area Policy (Zero Tolerance) to Fire Risk Approach’**
- ii. **‘Managed Use Approach’**

The default for all flats will be **“Clear Area Policy (Zero Tolerance) to Fire Risk Approach”** by which residents are not permitted to use the common parts to store or dispose of their belongings or rubbish.

When a need for a more tolerant approach is identified the elements listed in table 2 would be considered and if all elements are “yes” then a managed policy with agreed rules could be introduced.

<b>Element to be considered</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Fire risk assessment completed	✓	
Fire Compartmentation Satisfactory	✓	
Is the Anti-social behaviour level at a low historical value & satisfactory now	✓	
History of previous fires checked and at satisfactory level	✓	
Customer profile Checked and suitable	✓	
Customer agreed acceptance of rules with regards Managed Policy	✓	
Establishment of monitoring system to ensure compliance	✓	

Table 2 Elements to be considered in managed policy

6.4 **For further guidance please refer to Appendix 7**

6.5 **Local Arrangements**

The Local Arrangement’s put in place are those agreed by the CEO and Executive Board of each ALMO respectively and do not replace the overall citywide **Fire Safety Policy & Procedures Document**. In essence local arrangements refer to individual conditions that might be applied under the managed use approach, e.g., placement of pot plants and mats outside of front doors.

## **Section 7**

7.0 **Fire & Safety checks**

Premise occupied by Aire Valley Homes, East North East Homes and West North West Homes will have three levels of checks carried out upon them

### **Stage 1 (see appendix 1)**

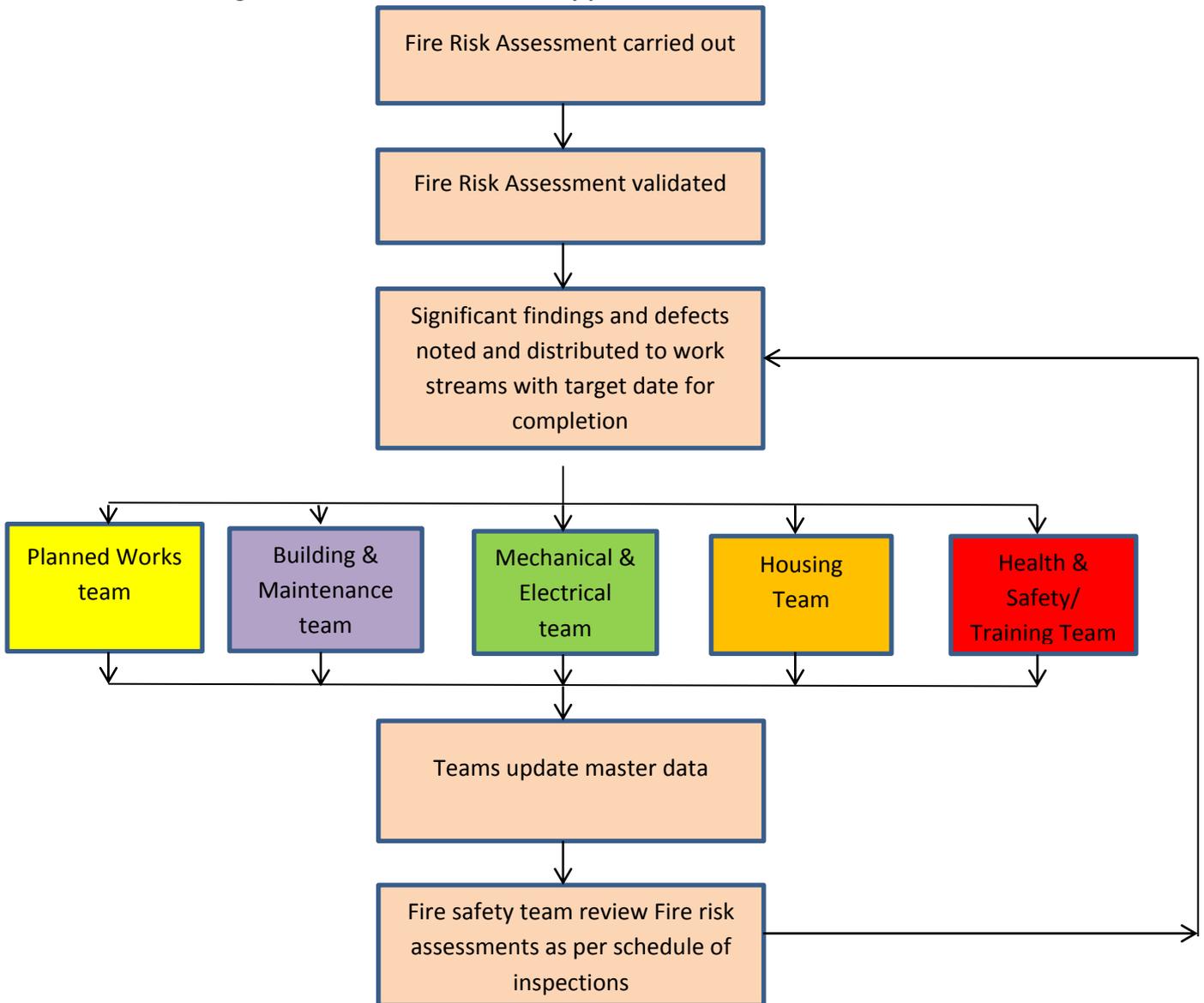
Fire & Safety Daily Checks by caretakers and cleaners, where faults are detected they will be reported to contact numbers supplied on the check sheet and managers will take action as necessary to resolve this matter, a log should be kept of any actions taken.

### **Stage 2 (see appendix 2)**

A documented Monitoring Fire & Safety Check inspection by a nominated ALMO person carried out on a risk appropriate basis. This inspection will examine in greater detail the safety provisions of the premise.

**Section 8**

**8.0 A diagrammatic view of the fire safety process**



**Section 9**

**9.0 Fire Safety Policy & Procedures**

This document contains the key points only. The Fire Safety Policy & Procedures regarding its use with the differing types of premise under the control of the responsible person is available electronically.