



Fire Safety Policy

SER-POL-08

Version 7.0

Date approved: 19th October 2021

Approved by: Audit and Risk Committee

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Southway Housing Trust (The Trust) recognises that it has a Duty of Care toward employees, residents, contractors, visitors and others who may be at risk from fire. This Policy sets out where those duties arise and how the Trust will operate to discharge these duties and responsibilities.
- 1.2 This Policy covers all Southway Housing Trust owned and leased properties and any communal areas therein.

2. Background, Legislation and Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 The Trust will abide by the responsibilities contained within the following legislation in relation to Fire Safety:
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - Fire Safety Act 2021
 - Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
 - Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996
 - The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - The Housing Act 2004 which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and Regulations (HHSRS)
- 2.2 The application of this policy will be in accordance with, and driven by, the result of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) that will be carried out periodically in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 2.3 Additionally the Fire Safety Act 2021 makes amendments to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 ("the FSO") and extends the provisions of the FSO to the following parts of a multi-occupied residential buildings:
- the building's structure, external walls and any common parts. The external walls include doors or windows in those walls, and anything attached to the exterior of those walls, e.g. balconies and cladding.
 - all doors between the domestic premises and common parts.

- 2.4 Since the scope and scrutiny of fire safety obligations have been increased, the Responsible Person needs to review and update the risk assessment processes accordingly.
- 2.5 The Trust wishes to reduce the incidence of fires within tenants' homes, even where there is no statutory responsibility placed upon the Trust. We set out the measures in place to achieve this, within this policy and associated procedure.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Overall responsibility for Health and Safety within the Trust rests with the Chief Executive. Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order the Strategic Director, Property and Development, is the 'Responsible Person' and consequently has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of fire safety.
- 3.2 The Strategic Director, Property and Development is responsible for ensuring the compliance and implementation of this policy, statutory requirements and relevant guidance in all premises.
- 3.3 The Head of Health And Safety and Compliance is responsible for of the general fire precautions provided at residential premises covered by this policy and ensuring that staff comply with all necessary requirements.
- 3.4 The Head of Health and Safety and Compliance is responsible for the audit and record keeping of incidents.
- 3.5 The Compliance Manager is responsible for the day to day management of the general fire precautions at residential premises, community and commercial premises and offices covered by this policy.
- 3.6 The Compliance Manager is responsible for the management of firefighting, alarm and emergency lighting systems and equipment, audit and record keeping of all fire related incidents.
- 3.7 The Compliance Manager will put suitable systems in place, for monitoring the effective implementation of this Policy. The key performance indicators for the effective management of fire will form part of the compliance report which will be updated monthly.
- 3.8 All members of staff have a general duty of care, to prevent fires by being alert to potential fire hazards and reporting such hazards accordingly.

4. Scope of Policy

4.1 This policy and associated procedure sets out the Trusts approach to Fire Safety in respect of:

Property Type	Responsible Person
Domestic rented properties	Head of Asset Management and Compliance
Domestic Leasehold properties	No duty of care
Communal areas and Sheltered Accommodation	Head of Asset Management and Compliance
Community Buildings Commercial and Office premises	Head of Health and Safety and Compliance and Compliance

5. Policy Statement

5.1 The key requirements of The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 will be met by implementation of this policy. These are:

- 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 accurate records
- Taking measures for fire detection and providing firefighting equipment
- Premises, facilities and other equipment and devices are suitably maintained
- Maintaining emergency exits and routes to emergency exits to ensure they provide quick and safe escape to a place of safety
- Appointing competent persons to help discharge these duties
- Providing safety training to staff
- Providing fire safety information to those occupiers and any other relevant persons
- Take account of dangerous substances held within a premises
- Consider taking additional control measures where young persons are employed

- Co-operate and seek co-operation from persons/organisations utilising or sharing our premises

5.2 The Trust will discharge its duties through:

- Carrying out regular Fire Risk Assessments for all qualifying buildings
- Identifying and hazards or lack of suitable fire management controls and measures
- Dealing with any hazards found by taking prompt corrective actions;
- Appropriate training of staff

5.3 A Fire Risk Assessment is a method of identifying fire hazards and assessing the likelihood and potential severity of the fire, so that appropriate precautions can be implemented to minimise risk.

5.4 The Strategic Director, Property and Development will ensure that:

- a) Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken to all properties referred to in this policy (Section 4.0 "Scope of Policy)
- b) Fire risk assessments are always completed by a competent person (who has undertaken an approved training course)
- c) A periodic programme to review fire risk assessments will be implemented as follows:

Category	Priority	Building Types
1 - High Risk	12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra Care/Sheltered • 6+ storey blocks, Office, community, and commercial buildings
2 - Medium Risk	24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 to 5 storey blocks
3 - Low Risk	36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below 3 storey • Properties with minimal communal areas

- d) Properties with minimal communal areas
- e) Fire risk assessments will be reviewed following any incident, change of use or structural alterations

- 5.5 Completed fire risk assessments will be held centrally within the offices of Southway Housing Trust
- 5.6 Action Plans will be used to ensure that general fire precaution measures and maintenance procedures are established following the completion of Fire Risk Assessments. The Trust is committed to completing all remedial works recommended by a fire risk assessment within the prescribed timescales.
- 5.7 Where third party agencies manage properties owned by the Trust, the Trust will ensure that the third party carries out regular Fire Risk Assessments.
- 5.8 Devise and implement a comprehensive Fire Safety Management plan, with individual process and procedures detailed within the Management Plan

6. General Fire Risks in domestic dwellings

- 6.1 The Trust will regularly communicate key fire safety messages to all of our tenants, and promote Home Fire Risk Assessment appointments to tenants, in partnership with Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS).
- 6.2 The Trust will identify tenants who pose a high fire risk (for example people with hoarding behaviour) and work in partnership with GMFRS and other partners to alleviate risk.

7. Fire Related Incidents

- 7.1 All fires, no matter how small and even if extinguished, must be reported in writing to the Strategic Director Property and Development, within one working day.

8. Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 The Trust will put in place robust monitoring methods to measure the effectiveness of this policy and The Compliance Team will ensure its effective implementation. To support this staff will use a detailed procedural guide.
- 8.2 Relevant fire safety processes will be monitored through the inspection of premises, maintenance and testing of systems and the training and advice provided to staff and residents.

9. Training

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of Health and Safety and Compliance to determine the respective training needs of their staff and of staff within the wider organisation and then to ensure that training is carried out as appropriate.
- 9.2 Guidance and recommendations in respect of suitable training for staff with specific roles will be included in the procedural guidance.

10. Equality and Diversity

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to ensure that appropriate adjustments are put in place to support people that have protected characteristics. An Equality Impact action plan supports this.

11. Links to Other Policies

- 11.1 Health and Safety Policy
- 11.2 Single Equality Scheme

POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
Previous versions (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
V4 – Audit and Risk Committee – 21/04/2015 – Fire Safety Policy and Procedure V5 – Audit and Risk Committee – 18/04/2017 V6 – Audit and Risk Committee 15/10/2019	
Date of last EIA:	08/04/17
Review lead by:	Compliance Manager
Main points or amendments made and reasons	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities amended to reflect new structure and responsibilities. • Reference to the Fire Safety Act 2021 included. • Strengthened the Trust’s approach to monitoring compliance. 	
Next review due:	Q2 2022/23

Approval level:	Audit and Risk Committee
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