Exeter City Council – Housing

Fire Safety Management Policy

Review history

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Original version:

IM – 2016-10-12

Sign off date:

12/10/2016

Signed off by:

Steve Esau - Housing Assets Service Lead

Date effective from:

14/07/2017

Review frequency

Biannually or in the event of new information or significant change

Last review date:

02/12/2019

Reviewed by:

Ian Miles - SHEQ Lead

This version:

IM20220118

Next review date:

When Building Safety Bill passed or January 2023 (whichever is first) and every two years thereafter.

Amendments log:

Start with date of amendment

a) First proposed version 12/10/2016
b) Second proposed version 17/01/2017
   o 4.3: clarification of the definition for 'Responsible Person'
   o 4.10: addition of the definition for 'clear areas
   o 8.1(p): clarification or resident responsibilities for clear areas
   o 10.1(i): clarification of fire risk assessment review periods
   o 10.6.2(a): minor changes to what must be included in floor plans
c) Third proposed version 26/06/2017
   o 4.3: incorporated new directorship management structure
   o 4.10: clear areas phrase replaced by less ambiguous 'escape route'
   o 9.2 i): inclusion of external cladding in things which might spread fire
   o 9.2 j): now highlights *how* to inform residents of the action to take in the event of fire direct by way of signage and at key hand-over
   o 10.1 b) new paragraph: *Any significant change to the fabric of a building, such as structural modification, installation of internal or external cladding will require a revised Fire Risk Assessment of sufficient technical depth; this may require the destructive testing of any new material or seeking a second opinion for any novel design prior to installation*
   o 10.3 c): differentiation between fire action notice and fire information
   o 10.4 c): clarification regarding disability hindering escape
   o 10.6.2 a) simplification of information needed by fire fighters following consultation with DSFRS
   o 10.7.1 c): clarification makes reference to escape routes rather than communal areas
   o 10.7.1 d): not to store in unallocated cupboards split off from 10.7.1 c)
d) Final proposed version 14/07/2017
   o 9.1 k) new paragraphs: *Where work may affect the compartmentation of the building or provide new routes for the spread of flame, heat and smoke then the Fire Risk Assessment should be reviewed and the significant findings recorded*
   o 9.1 l) new paragraph: *New products and materials must have been subject to suitable certificated testing. Where there is cause for doubt, independent advice should be sought before installation. This may require independent destructive testing*
   o 10.7.1) new sentence: *Not to keep a mobility scooter within the boundaries of the building or grounds without first receiving written authorisation*
e) Fifth issue 02/12/2019
   o 6.2 two additional bullets, the first referencing post Grenfell Tower fire directives, guidance and instructions and the second the Clear and Safe strategy report
   o 10.1 Removal of the word 'initial' before FRAs
   o 10.7.1 first sentence simplified for clarity with reference to Clear and Safe added
f) Sixth issue 18/01/2022
   o Replacement of Health, Safety and Compliance Lead throughout with Safety, Health, Environment and Quality Lead or SHEQ Lead
   o 2.1 c) Change from 'Confirmation of compartmentation' to 'Compartmentation assessments to reflect ongoing compartmentation assessment and remedials contract.
   o 4. Restructuring of Definitions table into alphabetical order to assist referencing and the addition for new definitions in preparation for the forthcoming Building Safety Act
   o 5. Minor updates to Responsibilities table to better reflect current management structure within Housing.
   o 6.2 Update of PAS standard and addition of two new fire statutory instruments
   o 9.2 a) Update of PAS standard
   o 10.2 c) Update of 'Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor' publication to latest 10/10/2020 issue
   o 10.7.3 – new bullet in preparation for Residents engagement strategy
   o 11.1 b) Requirement to keep monthly documents electronically.
o 21/03/2022 – correction of footer reference to reflect date of sixth review

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1. Objectives

1.1   Exeter City Council (Housing) will:

a) Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation

b) Undertake suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments of all premises and the activitieswithin premises

c) Identify and implement reasonably practicable control measures to reduce the risk tolife, property and the environment from fire

d) Provide employees, residents, visitors, contractors, fire fighters and others who may beaffected with such information and/or instructions and training as may be necessary

e) Conduct regular fire evacuation drills and testing of emergency equipment

f) Conduct regular fire safety inspections

g) Ensure timely liaison with the local fire authority

2. Introduction / Background

2.1   The principle legislation covering fire safety in England is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The Order covers general fire precautions and other fire safety dutieswhich are needed to prevent fire and to protect relevant persons in case of fire in most premises. The Order requires fire precautions to be put in place 'where necessary' and tothe extent that it is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances of the case.

2.2   The Order makes the "responsible person" responsible for fire safety precautions. The Order requires the employer or owner or those in control of the building to carry out a fire risk assessment to identify the precautions that are required, paying particular attention bothto people at special risk, such as those with disabilities and those with special needs, and toany dangerous substances that are likely to be on the premises.

2.3   The Order does not generally apply to "domestic premises" (defined as premises applied as a single dwelling) but they do apply to the common areas of multi-occupied residential buildings such those within blocks of flats as well as commercial buildings (including offices).

2.4   Exeter City Council has over 5000 domestic properties managed by its Housing department including houses, blocks of flats and homes of multiple occupancy (HMOs). Wherever these properties have common areas then the legislation will apply.

3. Policy Statement

3.1   Exeter City Council, Housing, (ECC-H) will ensure that the risk from fire will be managed sofar as is reasonably practicable in compliance with legislative requirements.

3.2   The management of fire risks will be undertaken in such a way as to:

a) prevent injury or ill-health to employees, tenants, visitors, contractors, fire fighters and others who may be affected by our undertakings

b) protect our buildings and associated structures from the effects of heat, smoke and fire

c) protect the property of neighbours whose proximity to our premises may mean that they would be effected by the effects of a fire in our property

4. Definitions

4.1 Accountable Person* The individual or body responsible for the safety of higher-risk buildings and who must appoint a Building Safety Manager.

Building Assessment Certificate (BAC)* For a Higher Risk Building, the Accountable Person must apply for a BAC by providing the Building Safety Regulator with required building fire safety info. The building cannot be occupied until the BAC is received.

4.2 Building Safety Manager* The competent person responsible for the day-to-day management of fire and structural safety in higher-risk buildings.

4.3 Building Safety Regulator* The new national Building Safety Regulator, which will sit in the HSE.

4.4 Higher-Risk Buildings* Buildings at least 18m in height or have at least seven storeys containing at least 2 residential units. The Secretary of State has the power to amend this definition.
Currently, only **Rennes House** falls under this category.

4.5 Common areas The communal parts within multi-occupied residential buildings such as blocks of flats: e.g. corridors, stairwells, lift lobbies, lounges, floor lobbies, bin stores, laundry rooms, etc.

4.6 Competent person A person (employee or external consultant) with enough training, experience, knowledge and other qualities to be able to make informed judgements appropriate to the complexity of the situation and implement suitable measures effectively.

4.7 Escape routes Those common areas which must be kept free from obstruction and combustible materials so escape/rescue is not impeded.

4.8 Exeter City Council, Housing (ECC-H) The term refers to Exeter City Council, Housing, and to no other section or part of Exeter City Council.

4.9 Fire Emergency Plan A written plan of the actions to take in the event of a fire.

4.10 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) An organised and methodical examination of a site along with the activities carried out on the site and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in/or around the site.

4.11 Fire Safety Logbook A record of all fire equipment maintenance, tests and inspections as well as training and drills. This must be retained in the building and be available for inspection at all times

4.12 Hazard Anything that has the potential to cause harm

4.13 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) A written plan for individuals who would need extra assistance or other special arrangements in the event of a fire emergency.

4.14 Relevant person Whoever may be at risk should a fire occur in a premises; e.g. employee, visitor, contractor, resident or fire fighter.

4.15 Responsible person Landlord, employer, owner or anyone else has control, or a degree of control, of a building or part of a building. For ECC-H this is normally the Director overseeing Housing. Control will also extend to persons who directly or indirectly influence or change the Housing department's management of fire safety.

4.16 Risk The likelihood of harm occurring and its potential severity

4.17 The Order The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

* New definitions which will be introduced and implemented by the forthcoming Building Safety Act

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Responsibilities for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of this policy.

5.2 Strategic Director
a) Monitor and oversee

5.6 Service Leads
a) Monitor and ensure the policy framework is applied locally
b) Ensure sufficient resources are available for effective procedures to support the policy
c) Provide sufficient training to ensure all relevant staff are competent to work safely, understand fire safety precautions and recognise fire hazards

5.8 Team Leads
a) Ensuring adequate management arrangements are in place to support the policy
b) Ensuring that the significant findings of fire risk assessments (remedial actions) are completed as soon reasonably practicable based on the level of priority
c) Maintain suitable systems to record and monitor and schedule maintenance, inspections and emergency repairs of fire related facilities and equipment
d) Manage and periodically test Fire Emergency Plans

5.9 Employees
a) Comply with local procedures and protocols
b) Report fire hazards and faulty facilities and equipment to line management
c) Undertake remedial actions when requested; e.g. ensuring escape routes remain unobstructed
d) Undertake their duties so as to support the policy

5.10 SHEQ Lead
a) Develop a workable strategy and supporting policy
b) Monitor the completion of FRA actions and that local management arrangements are suitable and sufficient
c) Ensure that fire risk assessments are conducted where required, reviewed within the set timescale.
d) Develop and analyse KPIs relating to the significant findings of FRAs
e) Provide reports and recommendations to the Housing Assets Service Lead and as directed
f) Assist and advise local management as required

6. References

6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with Exeter City Council policies relating to:

- Equality and Diversity
- Health and Safety
- Data protection

6.2   Reference material used to inform this policy:

- Guide to Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor (Version 2, published 09/10/2014 published by the Fire Risk Assessment Competency Council
- PAS 79-1:2020 & PAS 79-2:2020. Fire risk assessment, guidance and recommended methodology (BSI)
- Housing fire safety - Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existinghousing (LACORS)
- Fire safety in purpose built flats (LGA)
- Fire safety advice for landlords, managing agents, private dwellings, blocks of flats and owners of houses in multiple occupation and social housing (Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service)

- Fire safety in construction (HSE)
- Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation (HMGov)
- Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people (HMGov)
- Fire safety risk assessment: residential care premises (HMGov)
- Fire safety risk assessment: (HMGov)
- Dame Judith Hackitt report into Building Regulations and Fire Safety
- All Government, Ministerial, Recovery Task Force and Fire Service directives, guidance and instructions stemming from post Grenfell Tower fire learning
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Bill and associated documents

7. <u>Regulatory Framework</u>

7.1   Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Housing Act 2004
- Building Act 1984 and associated Building Regulations and Approved Documents
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015

8. <u>Policy Framework</u>

8.1   ECC-H will:

g)   Appoint one or more competent persons (see 4.2) to assist in undertaking any of the preventive and protective measures required by the Order

h)   Carry out fire risk assessments (FRAs) in accordance with the general principles described in **Appendix 1** and keep them updated to ensure that all fire precautions in all premises remain current and adequate.

i)   Periodically review FRAs at a frequency determined by the level of risk.

j)   Ensure that deficiencies identified by each FRA are risk rated and rectified without undue delay and with due consideration to the level of risk.

k)   Consider the presence of any dangerous substances and the risk this presents to relevant persons from fire.

l)   As part of the first-day induction process, provide all office-based ECC-H employees (including temporary, fixed term, agency and contractor workers) with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified by the FRA, how the risk of fire can be reduced, what to do in the event of fire or if the fire alarm sounds, the means of escape and how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.

m) Inform non-employees (such as residents, visitors and contractors) of the relevant risksto them and, where appropriate, the fire safety procedures for the premises.

n) Co-operate and co-ordinate with other responsible persons within organisations whose premises may be effected by our activities or fire precautions or vice versa.

o) Where appropriate, provide emergency services them with any relevant information about the premises, occupants and hazardous substances.

p) Provide appropriate information, instruction and training to staff.

q) Ensure that the premises and any equipment provided in connection with fire fighting, fire detection and warning, emergency lighting, escape routes and exits are maintained in efficient working order.

r) Carry out regular gas installation and electrical installation safety checks

s) Make tenants aware of the need to seek permission to undertake relevant modificationsto their properties and ensure that the terms of the tenancy agreements are enforced should unauthorised actions be discovered.

t) Ensure tenants understand the need to keep all communal corridors, stairwells and lobbies clear of any articles which may impede escape, hinder and endanger fire fighters or allow fire to spread. In practical terms, this requires all escape routes andstorage facilities not designated for personal use to be kept 'sterile'.

u) Ensure residents are provided with sufficient information so that they can understand sensible fire precautions, the importance of not interfering with or obstructing them andwhat they should do in the event of a fire.

9. Practical Implications

9.1 General

a) Responsibility for complying with the Order rests with the 'responsible person' (4.3).

b) In the event that a council senior manager, Councillor, executive officer, committee orpanel directly or indirectly influences or changes this policy or supporting procedure then they will assume a proportionate amount of the responsible person status.

c) If there is more than one responsible person in any type of premises (for example, amulti-occupied complex), all must take all reasonable steps to co-operate and co- ordinate with each other.

d) Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Services are the enforcing authority. They have powers to inspect premises, to serve a notice requiring alterations, to serve an enforcement notice requiring specific steps to be taken to remedy a breach of the Regulations and, in extreme circumstances, to serve a prohibition notice preventing the use of a specific property until steps have been taken to make it safe. Failure to complywith a notice is a criminal offence.

e) If ECC-H are not the employer, landlord, or premises manager/agent but have any control of premises which contain more than one workplace or common area, ECC-H are also responsible for ensuring that the requirements of the Order are complied within those parts over which we have control.

f) The responsible person must ensure a FRA is carried out which focuses on fire prevention and the safety in, case of fire, of all 'relevant persons'. The FRA will help identify risks that can be removed or reduced and to decide the nature and extent of thegeneral fire precautions that need to be taken.

g) The responsible person has to provide for all safety measures identified by the FRA.

h) The significant findings of every FRA shall be recorded.

i) Housing Officers will provide residents with information on what to do in the event of afire (see also 10.8). Where reasonably practicable, this information should be tailored to the specific circumstances of each residential building and include:

    i. advice on whether to evacuate the building or stay put

    ii. details about primary (e.g. corridors and stairwells) and secondary (e.g. interconnecting doors between flats and interconnected balconies) escaperoutes

    iii. the need to keep escape routes clear at all times

j) Where tailored information is provided, it should form part of the 'key collecting' process for all new tenants and new tenants should confirm they have understood the information provided.

k) Where work may affect the compartmentation of the building or provide new routes for the spread of flame, heat and smoke then the Fire Risk Assessment should be reviewed and the significant findings recorded.

l) New products and materials must have been subject to suitable certificated testing. Where there is cause for doubt, independent advice should be sought before installation. This may require independent destructive testing.

9.2 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)

a) Internal and externally contracted fire risk assessors must use and provide a risk matrix and report which is compatible with PAS 79-1 and PAS79-2 and in a format approved by the SHEQ Lead.

b) FRAs must consider the age and structure of the premises including fire resistance and fire stopping between common parts and residential accommodation.

c) Compartmentation assessments and monitoring of existing compartmentation to prevent fire spread should be undertaken where reasonably accessible and visible to the fire risk assessor. Any defects arising from wear and tear, vandalism or works during the lifetime of the building can then be identified and addressed.

d) Compartmentation designed to slow the spread of heat and smoke must be maintained. For example, if asbestos boards are removed during renovation, they must be replaced by an equally effective system or material. It is important that the location of such compartmentation within a property is known and any modifications to it are logged.

e) Attention must be given to the potential surface spread of flame (internal and external) and the fire resistance integrity of wall, ceiling linings and structures in escape routes.

f) The FRA should provide a profile of the residents and seek to pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as disabled people, those who have special needs and children, and include details of any dangerous substance found to be on the premises.

g) Effective management controls must be in place to ensure the means of escape are not obstructed or used for the storage of combustible materials. Where obstructions of fire escape routes or a build-up of combustible/flammable material has been identified, management must act as quickly as possible to ensure the hazard is removed and, if possible, visit or write to those responsible. Follow-up inspections should occur until it can be demonstrated that the matter is being controlled.

h) The means of escape must also be easy to identify, particularly at night.

i) Consideration should be given to the ability of fire to enter or develop and spread through voids such as ducting, risers and false ceilings and 'pathways' of combustible material such as external cladding and timber frames. Failure to address these issues can result in the rapid spread of fire horizontally and vertically, internally and externally.

j) Residents in sheltered schemes and blocks of flats should be made aware of the appropriate action to take in case of fire, as determined by the FRA, and the means of escape available to them (see also 10.7) by way of signage and at key hand-over.

k) Clearly observable fire action notices, escape route signs or other means of passing fire safety information should be provided for residents and others (see 10.7 & 10.8).

l) Following the FRA, the responsible person must take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required to ensure that the premises are safe.

m) There are also specific duties in relation to:
    i. Providing appropriate fire detection, fire alarm and fire fighting equipment
    ii. Ensuring that emergency exits are kept clear and are easy to use
    iii. Eliminating or minimising risks from dangerous substances
    iv. Having a suitable system of maintenance for the fire safety equipment to ensure that they are maintained in in efficient working order and in good repair

v. Providing information to employees and contractors

vi. Providing essential information to fire fighters

10. Procedure

10.1 Fire Risk Assessment

a) An external Fire Safety consultant or other competent person (such as an in-house surveyor) will be appointed to carry out FRAs of all premises where ECC-H controls(owns, occupies or manages) the building.

b) Any significant change to the fabric of a building, such as structural modification, installation of internal or external cladding will require a revised Fire Risk Assessment ofsufficient technical depth; this may require the destructive testing of any new material orseeking a second opinion for any novel design prior to installation.

c) Unless an exemption has been issued by the SHEQ Lead, ECC-H will ensure thecompetence of Fire Risk Assessors (external or internal) by selecting a fire risk assessor in strict accordance with the Fire Sector Federation's latest guidance document 'Choosing a Competent Fire Risk Assessor' (Version 3, published 01/10/2020).

d) FRA records will be held centrally in an easily retrievable format

e) Where it would be of use, a paper copy will also be held on-site for offices, shelteredschemes and other blocks where an on-site management presence is provided

f) In premises, where another party is the controller, a copy of their FRA must be held bythe ECC-H manager appointed for safety in that building.

g) Where a suitable and sufficient FRA is not forthcoming, ECC-H will undertake to complete a FRA of the relevant communal parts and facilities itself within three months.ECC-H will in any case carry out a FRA for the parts under ECC-H control.

h) Completed FRAs are likely to have one or more prioritised action points. The designated persons responsible for the building and managing fire risk assessment actions must ensure these are completed within time scales stipulated by the HealthSafety and Compliance Lead or individual FRA.

i) A central FRA register must be verifiable and contain:
    i. Property identification
    ii. Date FRA carried out and date for next review
    iii. Overall risk rating
    iv. Risk rated priority actions (P3 being the most urgent and P1 being the least) The recording system should also include or be linked to data regarding the completionof the priority actions.

j) Every FRA will be reviewed by a competent person periodically, according to the levelof risk. Typically:
    i. properties designated as an overall high risk by the last fire risk assessment, homes of multiple occupancy (HMOs), sheltered schemes and buildings abovethree floors will be reviewed annually; whilst
    ii. other properties will be reviewed biannually.

k) Reviews may be brought forward in the light of new information (e.g. new guidance orfollowing a fire investigation) or change to the structure, layout or use of the premises.

l) Uncomplicated FRA's may be reviewed after the completion of remedial works by internal staff (e.g. surveyors) who are not 'accredited' fire risk assessors provided theyhave attended an appropriate course and the initial FRA rating was not high risk.

10.2 'Stay put' or evacuation

The FRA will establish the most appropriate action to take in the event of a fire:

a) **Stay put** – Where compartmentation is known to be good and the nature of the residents (elderly or vulnerable) or building indicates mass evacuation may be difficultand a safety issue in its own right

b) **Evacuate** – Where escape is easy and requires no assistance or compartmentation isin doubt or in poor.

c) **Combination** – a phased evacuation or 'stay-put' and partial evacuation for tallerbuildings or where there is a combination of resident types

10.3   Fire Emergency Plan and Fire Action Notices

a) The Fire Emergency Plan will be influenced by and compatible with the FRA.
b) Fire Action Notices should be placed adjacent to call points or fire doors and fire exitsleading to a final point of exit from the building.
c) Fire information in addition to the Action Notice should be displayed on the notice board
d) Fire Emergency Plans should be practiced 6-monthly by conducting fire drills (see 10.5)
e) Residents are not expected to take part in any fire drills but staff with supervisoryresponsibilities should rehearse drills to cover any foreseeable eventualities.

10.4   Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

a) The aim of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is to provide people who cannot get themselves out of a building unaided during an emergency situation with enough information and assistance to be able to manage their escape from the building.
b) It is generally impracticable to create PEEPS for individual tenants because of their transient and changing nature (age, changing health, visitors, sudden illnesses, etc.).
c) Where it is known disabilities would hinder escape (e.g. the permanently non-ambulant tenants who are not likely to move address in the near future) then their flat number canbe identified as part of the information left securely on site for fire fighters.
d) Where reasonably practicable, such information should outline the likely assistancerequired to evacuate from the flat right through to the final exit of the building.

10.5   Fire drills

10.5.1   Offices, sheltered schemes and blocks <u>with on-site management presence</u>:

Fire drills should be held twice each year. Following the fire drills the appropriate managershould hold a short debriefing session with the other members of staff involved in order to learn of any problems or difficulties that were encountered. The problems and any remedial action taken (such as modifying the Fire Emergency Plan, see 10.3) to reduce their occurrence in the future should be recorded.

10.6   Information for fire fighters

10.6.1   For more complicated structures, e.g. complex blocks of flats, homes of multiple occupancyand schemes containing vulnerable residents, readily accessible information must be available for fire fighters on the scene. Such information should be located within a protected reception area or externally in a fire box.

10.6.2 Too much information can slow down fire fighters but the following should be consideredand reveiwed following FRAs:

a) Simple floor plans of the building identifying the location of any:
   i.   Flat numbers
   ii.   Fire fighting shaft(s) and fire fighting lift(s)
   iii.   Disabled refuges and/or communication points
   iv.   Dry or wet rising mains outlet locations
   v.   Hazards and their locations; e.g. oxygen cylinders, chemicals, bin stores,scooter charging rooms, etc.
   vi.   Mechanical or natural smoke clearance system(s) and control points
   vii.   Pavement vents
   viii.   Sprinkler systems - indicator panel, control valves etc.
   ix.   Other suppression system(s) and control panel

     x.   Fire alarm main indicator panel(s)

     xi.   Location of boiler room, gas stop valve, electrical intake main switch and watermains valve

b)   Contact names/numbers of key personnel and the responsible person(s) for the site

c)   If known, profile of occupants including the flat numbers of those who would needassistance

d)   Evacuation strategy

e)   Details of fire safety systems:

     i.   Smoke detection

     ii.   Alarm, including whether it is linked to fire lift, smoke vents, etc.

f)   The location of any harmful chemicals or hazardous substances

g)   Any unusual features

10.7   Information for residents

10.7.1 In accordance with the Clear and Safe initiative, Housing Officers should participate in the communication of key vital fire safety messages, including:

a)   How they can prevent fires in their own home and in the common parts

b)   The importance of keeping their block secure (making sure doors close behind themwhen they enter or leave)

c)   Reporting evidence of vandalism and arson

d)   Why all escape routes (communal corridors, stairwells and lobbies) must be free fromtrip hazards, obstacles, sources of ignition and combustible items at all times

e)   Not to store items in cupboards not allocated to them

f)   Not to store or use petrol, bottled gas, paraffin heaters or other flammable materials intheir flats, on their balcony or in shared areas

g)   Not to keep a mobility scooter within the boundaries of the building or grounds withoutfirst receiving written authorisation from the Housing department

h)   Not to charge mobility scooters (buggies) or other items in escape routes

i)   Not to use lifts in the event of a fire

j)   Keeping bin areas tidy and secure and bin chute hatches and doors closed

k)   The action they should take should the fire alarm activates or if they discover a fire

l)   The escape routes within their flats (including secondary 'emergency' routes such asseldom used hatches and interconnecting doors)

m) The escape routes within the building (including secondary 'emergency' routes suchinterconnecting balconies)

n)   What 'stay put' means if there is a fire elsewhere in the building (if that is the policy) andthe need to leave if they are being effected by smoke or heat

o)   The need not to obstruct fire exits internally or externally and not to wedge, tie orotherwise prevent fire doors from being closed

p)   How they can avoid inadvertently damaging the building's fire protection when makingchanges to their flat

q)   How they should use fire blankets, if provided, and why they should not move it orotherwise interfere with it except to use it in an emergency

r)   How to test their smoke alarms and how frequently

s)   Ways they can assist the fire and rescue service by not blocking access when parking,and by keeping fire main inlets and outlets, where provided, clear

t)   The location of general and disabled refuges

u)   How they can report essential repairs needed to fire safety measures in their flat andelsewhere in the block (e.g. broken fire doors or missing escape signage)

10.7.2   Providing such information is relatively straightforward for warden managed blocks. For other properties, a hierarchical strategy should be adopted to provide information that is asspecific as possible for each location:

a) As part of the key collection process

b) Writing to residents by block

c) Fire action notices by each alarm call point (if installed) or fire door

d) Poster in the entrance lobby

e) More generic advice in newsletters and resident handbooks

f) Pointing to external sources of information

10.7.3   Starting with higher-risk buildings (buildings with 7 or more floors or extra-care schemes)there will be a Residents' Engagement Strategy incorporating an enhanced internal complaints process. The details will be contained in the next Policy edition.

10.8   Information for others

10.8.1   Note: non-employees are free to make their own choices in the event of a fire.

10.8.2   It is often impractical to provide individual fire safety information to contractors working inresidential accommodation or to visitors (such as friends and relatives visiting residents, trade or delivery people). Therefore, appropriately placed fire action notices and escaperoute directional signage will be the prime source of information.

10.8.3   Where hot-work is to be undertaken (e.g. welding or the heating of pitch to repair a bitumenroof), extra precautions will be required. In practical terms, this means ensuring:

a) The contractor is competent to undertake such work

b) A risk assessment for the activity is completed and method statement provided

c) A permit to work system is utilised

d) A powder or other suitable fire extinguisher is carried by the contractor

e) Combustible material is removed from the area of work

f) Post work checks are made to ensure there is no smouldering in the vicinity of the work

10.8.2   Where another employer's staff work within managed schemes (e.g. carers), the general advice would be to follow the advice we provide to the residents; i.e. stay put if within a flator leave if within a common area.

11.   Monitoring and reviewing fire safety controls

11.1   The Responsible Person shall put management systems are in place which ensureall aspects of fire safety are monitored including:

   i.   Staff training

   ii.   FRA completion, review and corrective action completion

   iii.   Fire equipment maintenance

   iv.   Fire Emergency Plans and PEEPs

   v.   Fire drills

   vi.   Information provided to tenants

   vii.   Monthly monitoring of communal areas in blocks of flats (Clear and Safe)

   b) Monthly monitoring documents will be retained electronically.

   c) A fire log will be maintained on every managed scheme and made available forinspection as required.

12.   Equality and diversity

12.1   ECC-H will adhere to Exeter City Council's Equality and Diversity Policy in the implementation of this policy, and as such will not discriminate against any tenant on the grounds of his/her race, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, marital status, disability, age, religion or class (please refer to the ECC Equality & Diversity Policy for further information).

13.   <u>**Value for money**</u>

13.1   ECC-H will ensure sufficient resources are provided, so far as is reasonably practicable (unless an absolute duty is imposed by Regulation or Health and Safety at Work etc Act), toensure the successful implementation of this policy.

13.2   Notwithstanding the requirement above, Leads will embed a comprehensive approach to managing their resources to provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes tomeet tenants' and potential tenants' needs.

14.   <u>**Review**</u>

14.1   This policy and procedure will be reviewed biannually unless:

a)   There are significant changes to the premises, activities or legislation

b)   Deficiencies or omissions are identified

c)   The policy is deemed to be no longer effective or in line with corporate values

Appendix One

General Principles of Fire Safety Risk Assessment

A Fire Safety Risk Assessment is a five stage process:

Step 1 - Identify the hazards:
- Sources of ignition
- Sources of fuel
- Sources of oxygen

Step 2 – Identify people at risk:
- People in and around the premises
- People especially at risk

Step 3 – Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk
- Evaluate the risk of a fire occurring
- Evaluate the risk to people from fire
- Remove or reduce fire hazards
- Remove or reduce the risks to people
  - Detection and warning
  - Fire-fighting
  - Escape routes
  - Lighting
  - Signs and notices
  - Maintenance

Step 4 – Record, plan, inform, instruct and train
- Record significant finding and action taken
- Prepare an emergency plan
- Inform and instruct relevant people; co-operate and co-ordinate with others
- Provide training

Step 5 - Review
- Periodically as set by the risk assessment
- In the event of any significant interim findings or change