Fire Safety Management Policy

Directorate: Asset & Compliance
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Document Information

Scope:

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that everything reasonably practicable is done by Salix Homes to safeguard employees, customers, contractors and members of the public from personal injury, harm and ill-health resulting from fire and to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2004 (RRFSO). Our aim as an organisation is:

- to ensure that customers, employees, contractors, visitors and all property managed by Salix Homes, are safeguarded in the event of fire
- to minimise the risk of fires starting and spreading in properties managed by Salix Homes
- to ensure that all customers are aware of their responsibilities with regard to communal areas
- to create a climate where safe work practices and a safe workplace are part of normal business operation
- to safeguard fire fighters in their duty to fight fires or rescue persons from fire and maintain firefighting equipment as defined in Article 37 and 38 of the RRFSO

Service Standards / Performance Measures / Corporate Strategy:

- All properties that fall under the jurisdiction of the RRFSO to have a Type 3 FRA minimum;
- A new Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is completed as per the frequencies defined in the procedure or though changes in structure/occupancy risk
- All fire risk actions, recommendations and observations to completed be assessed and completed within the recommended time frame defined by the procedure;
- All active fire protection (extinguishers, alarms, sprinklers, dry risers, emergency lighting) are inspected, serviced and maintained in line with British Standards or best practice;

Fire risk assessments

- All workplaces and communal buildings have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place prepared by a competent person (as described in Article 18 of the RRFSO)
- New FRA's are completed for high-rise properties annually whilst sheltered schemes and similar shared occupancy buildings every will be completed every 2 years. Low rise blocks, offices and shops will have a new fire risk assessment every 3 years.
- All actions, recommendations and observations arising from fire risk assessments are closed accordingly and recorded in Aurora – Total Fire Services web based database.
- FRA's in place/expired along with current fire risk assessment

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actions/recommendations/observations are reported at the Compliance Review Meeting to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Service director – Asset Management on a monthly basis.

- FRA's in place/expired are reported through the Compliance Dashboard to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Board bi-monthly. A further Compliance Dashboard is reported to SMT at the performance clinic every quarter.
- All FRA's are reviewed annually prior to their 12 month anniversary. Reviews are held within the Fire Risk Management folder and completed by the Responsible Person Deputy and/or the Responsible Person as defined in the Policy.
- New FRA's are completed on all buildings following a significant change to the building or its use, after significant changes, a significant fire incident or legislative change.
- All FRA's are archived for a minimum of five years.

Equipment

- All passive and active firefighting, detection and prevention equipment is inspected, serviced and maintained at least annually in accordance with Article 17 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 where required.
- Inspections of these items is reported at the Compliance Review Meeting to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Service director – Asset Management on a monthly basis

Information, instruction and training

- Employees, contractors and customers are given suitable, appropriate and relevant information about the risks to them that have been identified through the risk assessment process and the precautions taken to ensure their safety from fire.
- All relevant persons will be provided with appropriate general information and instructions relating to fire safety in buildings they occupy or work in. This will be in the form of fire action notices, warning signs about specific fire hazards etc displayed in communal areas. All relevant persons will also be provided with information on evacuation procedures and the provision of fire detection and suppression where fitted in the form of fire safety guidance documents, newsletters and posters.
- Evacuation advice and fire safety information is given to all customers at sign up appropriate to their building including evacuation arrangements and safe storage of personal items.
- All new customers are given the option to be referred to the fire service for a Safe & Well visit at sign up. Existing customers can request a visit at any time.
- Salix Homes will provide general fire safety information and advice for any persons identified as being vulnerable (physical and/or mental disability that may arise difficulties in self evacuating in an emergency situation). Details of vulnerable customers will be maintained at Diamond House and also maintained within the Point of Information Box (PIB) located at the entrance of all High Rise and Sheltered blocks to be used by the fire service in the event of an evacuation phased or full. Only those residents identified as vulnerable pertinent to the specific block will have their address noted within the PIB box.
- All employees who are nominated as fire wardens or fire marshals or who carry out other tasks related to fire safety management will receive suitable information, instruction and training to undertake their role at appointment and refresher training as required.

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- All employees are provided with fire awareness training through Buzz Learn e-learning and periodically thereafter. Records of all training will be retained for the duration of employment and for at least 3 years after termination of employment.

Inspections and monitoring compliance

- All communal areas are as a minimum inspected daily on high rise and monthly on low rise by Environmental Services to include communal areas, stairwells & corridors are clear from obstruction and combustible items and ensure all fire doors are closing and in working order.
- All high-rise blocks are inspected daily by environmental services during normal working hours and first response outside of normal working hours. Personal items presenting significant fire hazards will be removed to a secure location. Items posing a less significant risk will be notified through a TORT to remove within 7 days or be removed to a secure location.
- All high-rise blocks are audited minimum every six months by Property Safety Officers for compartmentation, fire door integrity and general fire risk to the common areas.
- Inspection of construction sites (as per CDM and audit procedures) to confirm fire safety management integrity - at least once during the life of the project by the Health and Safety team.
- All contractors undertaking fire stopping must adhere to the Fire Stopping Preamble. Any contractors carrying out works to the firefighting equipment, passive or active fire protection to the building will be deemed competent to carry out the works either by certification or training.

Risks:

Salix Homes acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities to comply with the RRFSO to manage fire risk in its properties. Failure to comply with these responsibilities may result in enforcement action including prosecution by external agencies, loss of reputation, injury or fatality to employees or others and civil claims. Approved guidance information by the Health and Safety Executive shall be taken as the adopted standard. Failure to adequately manage the risk can lead to:

- Enforcement action by enforcing authorities
- Costs of civil action by persons or companies for loss / damage
- Cessation of use or closure of property as a result of prohibition notices and costs of remedial actions and investigations;
- Compensation for persons where civil action is taken and liability is proven;
- Increase in insurance premiums due to claims
- Costs of legal representation in event of criminal and / or civil action; and
- Loss of goodwill or poor corporate image.

The main risk factors associated with the successful delivery of this procedure are:
- Failure of Salix Homes to hold a current FRA;
- Failure of Salix Homes to complete an annual review (where applicable);
- Failure of Salix Homes to close down all FRA actions, recommendations and observations;
- Failure of Salix Homes to maintain all fire prevention, detection and equipment in line with testing, maintenance schedules and best practices;

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- Failure to ensure communal areas remain sterile and sufficiently fire stopped to prevent the risk of fire and both smoke and fire spread;
- Serious harm or fatality due to inadequacy or inaccessibility of escape arrangements, failure of compartmentation or eternal fire spread due to external cladding materials

Measures for Managing the Risk

Effective management of the FRA cyclical programme is undertaken by a database, Accuserve, informing of all in date FRA's and their expiry dates noting those due to expire and expired.
Effective management of the cyclical fire protection systems and installations programme is undertaken by a database, Accuserve, informing of all in date test/service/maintenance certificates and their expiry dates noting those due to expire and expired.

All works as denoted by the FRA or through the cyclical test/service/maintenance programme. will be assessed by the Responsible Person and actioned where required.

The above are however standard recommendations and as such an individual Responsible Person may observe or amended the recommendations, as deemed appropriate. Any amendments to recommendations will be based upon the Responsible Person's own intimate knowledge of such criteria as:
- risk to life and/or building
- predicted future occupation levels for the building
- future refurbishment projects
- advisement of future safety standards

These will be assessed by Salix Homes and then employed to identify the most appropriate and applicable management strategy for each of the property.

The following strategic risks are linked to this policy and show the relevant mitigating controls:

SR36 – Failure to manage assets to comply with agreed standard and produce the planned financial and social returns
- Newly approved (Mar 20) Asset management Strategy, Policies and Procedures in place with monthly financial monitoring of the investment programme ensuring forecasts are in-line with the organisations current business plan
- High level (>90%) of full stock condition surveys to increase the accuracy of the organisations thirty year asset investment plan
- Home Safety Checks (100% where access can be achieved through routine measures (Decent Homes Strategy))
- Regular monitoring and reporting of property KPI Dashboard to SMT and Board
- Mandatory Occurrence Reporting spreadsheet in place for hi-rise buildings over 15m, capturing causation issues, points of investigation, resolution and reporting to regulator

SR40: Failure to prepare for the implementation of the new Building Safety Regulations

- The organisation as one of MHCLG's early adopters is testing and learning from the government's implementation plan proposals

Document Information

- We will continue to undertake FRA's to a minimum level 3 linked to periodic structural surveys and periodic building safety inspections and tests such as legionella, LOLER, gas and electrical checks etc.
- Introduced new safety standards for all contractors working in our complex buildings along with mandatory occurrence reporting process to enable customers, contractors and employees to report building safety concerns
- Introduced new safety literature, processes and controls to promote and encourage the engagement and responsibility of customers living in complex buildings.
- Regular feedback and updates provided to staff, contractors and Board on the proposed changes and updates on building safety matters
- Salix are part of a national working group that is working across the sector to develop a Building Information Management System (BIM) to create digital records and management systems of existing buildings
- Resources have been identified and included in the 30 year Business Plan based on current financial assumptions linked to MHCLG proposals

Related Policy/Procedure & Documents:

Fire Safety Management Procedure
Fire Risk Assessment Review Form
Fire Alarm Activation, Testing, Maintenance & Repair Document
Incident reporting procedure and forms
Building access permit forms
Contractors code of conduct (including fire pre-amble)
Customer fire safety information leaflets
Health & Safety Policy

Related Legislation / Relevant Regulation:

Building Regulations 2010: Part B: Fire Safety
Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 SI 2007/320
Electrical Equipment (Safety and Use) Regulations 1989
Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1998
Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974
Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations (1996)
The Housing Act 2004
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations SI3242 (1999)
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

Retention & Legal Basis for Storage:

All activities and their legal basis for processing are captured on the Information Asset Register. All retention periods are stored within the Data Retention Schedule.

Stakeholders:

There has been no stakeholder consultation during the review of this policy.

Document Information
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) A DPIA was completed by the Asset & Compliance Manager in April 2020 and found that a full DPIA was not required as there were no data protection risks involved in the process.
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) An EIA was completed by the Asset & Compliance Manager in April 2020 and found that a full EIA was not required as there were no E&D risks involved in the process.

Introduction

1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that Salix Homes complies with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) and for the provision of fire prevention and firefighting measures in offices, blocks of flats and other shared accommodation ensuring all practicable measures are taken to prevent and control fire risks and to ensure that the requirements of the RRFSO will be implemented as applicable to the company.

2. Following the Grenfell Tower Incident and the potential for changes to the governing of fire safety within shared communal buildings this policy will ensure that any new regulation, legislation and best practice are adopted as seen fit as far as reasonably practicable in line with the Fire Safety Management of Salix Homes properties and Salix Homes Business Strategy.

Fire Safety Management

3. Salix Homes acknowledges the risks associated with poor fire safety management and this policy recognises the duties set out in the RRFSO as a landlord and an employer to ensure all practicable measures are taken to prevent and control fire risks.

4. Salix will take all reasonably practical measures to prevent or minimise the probability of all causes of fire and maintain compliance with the RRFSO, by ensuring that

    *   a suitable fire safety management structure is in place that manages fire risk for the organisation;

    *   all properties that fall under the jurisdiction of the RRFSO is afforded a Type 3 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) to communal areas as a minimum standard;

    *   new FRA's are conducted to properties as per the schedule as defined in the procedure or where alterations have occurred to the building that may have impacted the overall fire strategy of property;

    *   fire risk assessment actions are completed in a practicable approach within timescales as defined in the procedure;

    *   a minimum annual review is undertaken of all FRA's;

    *   all fire safety measures are designed installed and maintained by competent people as defined in Article 18 of the RRFSO and that all such work is in accordance with the latest British Standards and relevant building regulations including Approved Document B;

    *   procedures are established and implemented the to ensure that the risk of fire is minimised and that fire safety standards are maintained, including an appropriate inspection, testing and maintenance regime is in place as defined in Article 17 of the RRFSO which ensures that all fire safety equipment both passive (e.g. compartmentation) and active (e.g. fire alarms) are kept in effective and serviceable condition;

- contractors who work within communal areas are to ensure they adhere to both the permit to works process, Salix Homes fire stopping preamble and where applicable the hot works permit to works process;

- Salix Homes will maintain sterile areas within communal areas;

- all fire notifications are investigated;

- to inform residents of their responsibilities and evacuation strategy of their property;

Responsibilities

Management and Hierarchy of Control

5.   To ensure that the Fire Safety Management Policy and Fire Safety Management Procedure are adhered to, suitably experienced and senior employees within Salix Homes will be nominated to act as a 'Responsible Person' to oversee their effective implementation and review on behalf of the individual Duty Holder.

Management Responsibilities

6.   The duties as set out in the RRFSO will rest with the person in control of the premises of properties providing rented or leased accommodation.

7.   In terms of the individual Duty Holders and their property portfolio, the responsibility for the implementation of this Policy and the associated Fire Safety Management Procedure will rest with selected members of the senior management team to act as appointed 'Responsible Persons' in the management of fire safety.

8.   Those personnel within the Salix Homes senior management structure and their associated responsibilities in managing fire safety are given below:

- The Duty Holder: **Chief Executive Officer**
  Responsible for the implementation of this policy.

- The Responsible Person: **Asset & Compliance Manager**
  Responsible for the day to day controlling of the associated procedure to this policy,
  and responsible for the implementation of this procedure and the authorised deputy.

- Responsible Person Deputy: **Compliance Manager (Asbestos & Fire**)
  Responsible for the day to day controlling of the associated procedure to this policy in the event the responsible person is unavailable.
  These persons will be suitably trained and aware of their duties under current guidance and this policy document.

- Health and Safety Manager
  Responsible for audits of fire safety compliance

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Page	8 of 9	Approval status:	Final
		Approved by:	SMT

- <u>All Employees</u>
Responsibilities to not interfere with, tamper with or move any equipment, provided in connection with firefighting, fire detection and warning. Responsible to ensure communal areas remain sterile and accessible at all times.

  Responsible for reporting any defects or fire hazards including but not limited to any compartmentation breaches, damage to any fire safety installation seen, inappropriate working practices in any Salix Homes property.