

Electrical safety policy

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1. Scope

This policy outlines Ealing Council's approach to electrical safety and applies to all housing stock owned or managed by the council, which includes both individual homes, communal areas and outside blocks of flats.

An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical wiring and equipment that is supplied beyond the electric meter of a property. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the fabric of the building (walls, floors and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs).

This policy covers repair, upgrading, testing and inspection of all electrical installations. All electrical repairs, upgrades and renewals will be categorised to ensure that the correct levels of priority are given. The council will take specific account of any health and safety requirements during the prioritisation process for these works.

The policy also covers any electrical equipment owned by the council that is used to provide services or is located in the communal areas of buildings.

Electrical systems will be repaired, renewed, upgraded and tested in accordance with industry guidance and manufacturers' recommendations.

Typical installations and systems covered include:

- domestic electrical installations

- communal landlord installations
- emergency lighting systems
- fixed fire or carbon monoxide alarm installations
- communal fire alarm systems
- door entry systems
- automatic opening vents (AOVs)
- lightning Protection
- communal TV aerials
- warden pull cord system
- electric heating systems
- portable equipment owned by the council
- photovoltaic panels (PVs)

All references to the council within this document refer to the council's functions as a landlord of residential property.

2. Aims and objectives

The aim of this policy is to ensure that we meet our obligations as a landlord, and seeks to provide assurance that electrical safety is well managed, ensuring the safety of our residents, our employees, our contractors and the general public.

We ensure a compliant and uniform approach is adopted, and the service delivered meets statutory requirements and is consistent with good practice. Compliance with this policy will ensure that:

- all installed electrical equipment and materials are of the correct type
- all parts of the fixed electrical installation are correctly selected and installed
- no part of the fixed electrical installation is visibly damaged or otherwise defective

- recording all electrical checks, inspections and tests including test results, keeping them throughout the working life of an electrical installation

3. Policy statement

As owners and managers of homes, we have a duty of care to ensure that the homes we own and manage are safe. We will do this for electrical safety by:

- setting out a clear approach for the maintenance and upgrading of electrical installations. Ensuring a prompt, efficient and cost-effective electrical repair, servicing and inspection service
- ensuring legal compliance and promoting good practice
- ensuring remedial works are carried out within appropriate timescales so that homes remain safe and electrical installations are maintained to a high standard
- outlining a comprehensive electrical inspection and monitoring system
- ensuring records are maintained for all electrical safety checks, inspections and tests (including test results), and evidence of any remedial work for the life span of the electrical installation
- ensuring quality monitoring systems are in place

4. Electrical testing and certification

We will ensure that all our homes and communal installations are tested in accordance with the Institute of Engineering Technology (IET) Regulation statutory timescales. We test and issue certification prior to the re-letting of our properties. We will also carry out Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) testing on all properties that are subject to particular types of improvement work where electrical circuits are affected.

Electrical works identified on certification are recorded using the

following categories:

- **Code C1:** Where a real and immediate danger is observed that puts the safety of those using the installation at risk. The contractor will advise in writing, immediately, of the urgent work necessary to remedy the deficiency.
- **Code C2:** An observed deficiency not considered to be dangerous at the time of inspection but would become a real and immediate danger if a fault or other foreseeable event was to occur.
- **Code C3:** Used to indicate that, whilst an observed deficiency is not considered to be a source of immediate or potential danger, improvement would contribute to an enhancement of the safety of the electrical installation.

FI: Where further investigation is required.

Our homes will be subject to a full electrical condition report (EICR) test at the following times:

- all homes and communal areas are to be inspected every 5 years (unless a different interval is recommended during an inspection)
- at a change of occupancy, including all voids and mutual exchanges
- following any major upgrade works where electrical installations are affected
- after any significant event such as fire, flood or other occurrence that would warrant inspection

5. Managing risk

Prior to commencement of any work activities, a suitable risk assessment covering the full scope of works will be completed. This assessment will include the impact of works on all tenants and leaseholders affected, and should be drawn up in collaboration with the neighbourhood team to make sure it takes the needs of any vulnerable residents into account.

The main hazards would include:

- contact with live exposed parts.
- faults which could cause fires or electrocution
- fire or explosion where electricity could be the source of the ignition
- defective and inoperable systems
- system overload
- inadequate or deficient earthing and bonding
- failure to comply with legislative requirements

6. Resident engagement

The council will provide all residents with information on how we manage electrical safety in their homes and the buildings they occupy.

We will ensure that all electrical safety information is produced in an accessible format so that it is easily understood, this is contained in the tenant's handbook.

Leaseholders who decide to let their properties will be reminded of their landlord obligations to their tenants.

Under the terms of their tenancy agreement, residents are required to allow access to their property for maintenance and/or safety checks to be conducted.

We will always work in partnership as landlord with our tenants. However, when this relationship breaks down, we will use the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy and lease agreements, should any tenant or leaseholder refuse access to carry out essential electrical safety inspections and remediation works, where we have a responsibility to do so.

7. Contractor engagement

Ealing Council will only use accredited electrical contractors registered under a recognised domestic inspection and testing certificate as defined by BS 7671.

Only skilled persons as defined by BS 7671 including current amendments are authorised to conduct inspections and testing. A person is deemed skilled to conduct the appropriate inspection and testing if they have sufficient knowledge and experience of the test equipment, the installation being assessed and testing procedures.

Contractors are required to:

- abide by relevant legislation and technical guidance
- keep up to date with any amendments and comply with the Contractor Code of Conduct
- comply with the requirements of this policy when undertaking electrical installation works

Contractors and others working in Ealing Council homes and communal areas are required to demonstrate that their representatives understand how the work they undertake may impact on the electrical safety. No works can begin until the method statement for the activity has been approved by the council. Contractors are required to immediately report any electrical related risks or concerns to the building safety manager (electrical) and to stop ongoing works if the concern is significant or warrants immediate action.

8. New build

Ealing Council will comply with The Building Regulations 2010 (as amended), including Approved Document P - Electrical Safety -

Dwellings.

9. Supporting vulnerable residents

Ealing Council is committed to ensuring that vulnerable residents are supported, and that household vulnerability and reasonable adjustment requirements are taken into account when providing services to residents.

We will assess the needs of residents who inform us they have a disability such as a hearing impairment, visual impairment or mobility issue, and will adjust our approach to best meet the needs of the resident whilst ensuring compliance with our obligations as a landlord, and maintaining the safety of our wider resident and community base.

10. Diversity and inclusion

Ealing Council will ensure that all electrical safety information is shared with residents in a form and language that is easily understood.

An equality impact assessment 'initial screening' has been carried out which determined there to be no negative impact specific to those with protected characteristics.

11. Monitoring, compliance, and review

The day-to-day responsibility for electrical safety for the council's housing stock implemented in line with this policy has been delegated, via the chief executive, to the strategic director of housing and environment. Performance is monitored by the senior leadership team in Housing and Environment against targets of key

performance indicators

namely:

- % of blocks with current EICR in place
- % of homes with current DICR in place
- oldest date of overdue EICR for block
- oldest date of overdue DICR for individual home (no of homes more than 1 year overdue)
- % of unsatisfactory EICRs

The performance information is shared with appropriately engaged residents.

We will regularly review and monitor the qualifications of all contractors' employees delivering works to ensure that only appropriately trained and skilled employees are engaged on electrical works to our homes.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, unless new legislation or good practice means it needs to be reviewed sooner.

12. Governance

The council's cabinet has overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented to ensure compliance with the law.

In practical terms, the chief executive reports to cabinet to demonstrate accountability for corporate health and safety across the council and will also ensure that property health and safety compliance management duties in its landlord function, are properly controlled and managed.

The day-to-day responsibility for electrical safety for the council's housing stock is implemented in line with this policy has been

delegated, via the chief executive, to the strategic director of housing and environment.

The electrical safety management plan also identifies the roles and responsibilities of those who will undertake the day-to-day tasks.

13. Legal framework

Ealing Council is committed to ensuring the safety of residents and other stakeholders with regards to electrical installations in its domestic properties and buildings. The following legislation is complied with although not fully exhaustive, include:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing Act 2004
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018
- Requirements for Electrical Installation IET Wiring Regulations Eighteenth Edition
- Guidance Note 3: Inspection & Testing, 9th Edition

14. Associated policies and procedures

Electrical safety management plan

Voids policy

Voids procedure

Repairs policy

Building safety policy & management plan

Housing household vulnerability and reasonable adjustments policy

15. Implementation

The implementation of this policy is through the electrical safety management plan.