

## Fire safety policy

Department:	Housing asset management
Policy date/last update:	June 2025
Policy review date:	June 2027

## Content

1. Scope .....	2
2. Aims and objectives .....	3
3. Policy statement .....	4
4. Fire risk assessments .....	4
5. Resident engagement .....	6
6. Contractor engagement .....	7
7. New homes .....	8
8. Supporting vulnerable residents .....	8
9. Training .....	9
10. Diversity and inclusion .....	9
11. Managing risk .....	10
12. Monitoring, compliance, and review .....	11
13. Audit .....	11
14. Governance .....	12
15. Legal framework .....	13
16. Associated policies and procedures .....	13
17. Implementation .....	14

## 1. Scope

This policy outlines Ealing Council's approach to fire safety and applies to all homes and housing stock owned or managed by Ealing Council including the properties managed by South Acton Community Builders Co-operative (SCBC), to which the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended by the Fire Safety

Act 2021), and the Building Safety Act 2022 are applicable.

Ealing Council is currently responsible for c9,187 general needs tenants, 1,090 sheltered housing tenants and 4,861 leasehold properties (as at June 2025). There are 28 buildings which are categorised as higher risk residential buildings (residential buildings 7+ storeys) in the Building Safety Act 2022.

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

## **2. Aims and objectives**

The aim of this policy is to show how the council will keep our customers safe by ensuring we meet our legal and regulatory requirements for fire safety in our homes and communal areas. All landlords have a legal responsibility to comply with these regulations, which are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

To minimise the risk of fire in our residential properties and keep our residents safe we will:

- maintain robust fire risk assessments and action plans on all housing property
- take all reasonable steps to ensure all housing property is maintained in line with a formal safety management system/framework and to best practice standards to minimise the risk of fire
- implement, review and improve so we have a robust fire safety culture throughout the organisation

- support residents to be fully aware of their responsibilities under the tenancy agreement or lease, and how they can access fire safety advice, and understand fire risk
- ensure the Accountable Person (AP) role provides an effective assessment and management of the council's homes and buildings' safety and provide any required information to residents about their building where required, and in accordance with legislation
- share information with residents about all aspects of fire safety
- liaise with the London Fire Brigade (LFB) in respect of fire prevention

### **3. Policy statement**

As owners and managers of homes, Ealing Council has a duty of care to ensure that the homes and communal areas we own and manage are safe.

### **4. Fire risk assessments**

Fire risk assessments (FRAs) are an essential tool for the identification and control of fire hazards in addition to the prioritisation of the control measures. The formal arrangements for fire risk assessments have been enshrined in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order since October 2006 and are further clarified in the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022.

Fire risk assessments are undertaken by competent persons in accordance with current legislation, relevant industry standards and best practice.

When issues have been identified during the assessment, they are quality checked by the fire safety manager and, when necessary,

remedial action is prioritised as:

1. serious immediate danger remedial actions (within 24 hours)
2. high priority remedial actions (30 calendar days steps will be made to make safe through temporary repair or through the introduction of interim control measures if task cannot be completed within the target timeframe)
3. medium priority remedial actions in high-risk buildings (high rise blocks; sheltered blocks; hostels) (90 calendar days)
4. medium risk remedial actions for all other buildings (90 calendar days)
5. low priority remedial actions (180 calendar days)

Tasks arising from FRAs are given a defined target completion date recommended by the competent persons undertaking the FRA guidelines in brackets above.

FRA tasks are updated as the task progresses to completed with a full audit trail and appropriate evidence in place before the task is closed.

The frequency of fire risk assessments will be in accordance with the following schedule or the opinion and recommendation of the risk assessor. The schedule varies according to building type:

- converted street properties – annual
- sheltered blocks/hostels – annual
- purpose built blocks (7+ storeys) – annual
- purpose built blocks (2-6 storeys) – 3 years
- community centres/community hubs – 3 years
- travellers sites - annual

In addition, we will review a building's fire risk assessment **no matter what the risk category** is:

- immediately following a fire, near miss or threat of arson
- immediately following any works affecting the means of escape or alarm systems
- whenever there has been any structural or material changes to the building
- when we have been served with any notice from a regulatory body

## 5. Resident engagement

We will provide all residents with information on how to support fire safety in their homes and the buildings they occupy. Regular updates will be provided through a range of methods.

We will ensure that all fire safety information that is produced for residents will be first considered and approved by our engaged residents.

We will provide:

- a resident engagement strategy for each higher risk building (as defined in the Building Safety Act 2022)
- information about the findings of each fire risk assessment and any action that needs to be taken
- fire safety instructions that relate to each building
- information on the importance of fire doors to a building's fire safety
- an effective process to report safety concerns
- assurance that all residents (whatever their impairment) can participate fully in decision making regarding fire safety

Ealing Council will undertake, and keep up to date, a person-centred fire risk assessment (PCFRA) for those residents who have an increased risk in the event of fire. This includes those with impairments who may need assistance to leave the building. Those PCFRAs will be reviewed at least annually.

Ealing Council expects that its residents:

- will not act in a way that creates a significant risk of a building safety risk materialising
- must not interfere with a relevant safety item
- comply with a request for information reasonably required manage building safety risks
- must not make any changes to their property without the written permission of the council

In addition, leaseholders who decide to let their properties will be reminded of their landlord obligations to their tenants.

## **6. Contractor engagement**

Contractors, and others working on Ealing Council property are required to demonstrate that their representatives are competent and understand how the work they undertake may impact on the fire safety of the building and to take appropriate measures to ensure that the fire safety integrity of the building is not compromised. No works can begin until the method statement for the activity has been approved by the council.

Qualified and competent contractors will be appointed to provide services to meet the requirements of this policy. The minimum requirements are:

- fire risk assessments (IFE Approved Qualification BAFe

SP205-1)

- fire installations (BAFE SP203)
- fire fighting equipment (SP101)

Contractors are required to immediately report any fire-related risks or concerns to their client officer and stop ongoing works if the concern is significant or warrants immediate action.

In addition, those working on buildings within scope of the Building Safety Act 2022 must be able to demonstrate their competence in accordance with the appropriate Publicly Available Standard (PAS).

## **7. New homes**

We will ensure that all new developments will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of all applicable legislation to include that of the Building Safety Act 2022. In order to demonstrate that the 'golden thread' has been followed and be shown within the safety case submission to the Regulator of Social Housing, prior to a building's occupation, Ealing Council will record the information required from concept design through to demolition in a digital system that is readily accessible to those that need it to maintain building safety.

All fire risk during the construction phase will be managed in line with CDM regulations 2015.

## **8. Supporting vulnerable residents**

Ealing Council is committed to ensuring that vulnerable residents are supported, and that household vulnerability and reasonable



adjustment requirements are considered 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.

## **9. Training**

We will implement, manage and monitor adequate fire safety training, instruction and awareness for all employees involved in the management of fire safety including:

- fire safety awareness (online) – all resident facing roles are to undertake this online session within their induction as part of core training with a refresher annually
- fire warden (sheltered housing) – fire wardens for hostels and sheltered housing schemes (scheme-based staff who test fire alarm and may help coordinate an evacuation) are required to undertake this session annually

Training needs will be identified as part of the role risk assessment process and will be monitored by line managers.

## **10. Diversity and inclusion**

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

An equality impact assessment 'initial screening' has been carried out which has influenced the formation of this policy and will also affect the procedure to make sure that our implementation of this policy does not have a detrimental impact on our disabled or elderly residents.

## **11. Managing risk**

The council will maintain up-to-date records (asset register) of all premises it owns or manages setting out whether premises require a fire risk assessment (FRA).

Premises requiring an FRA will meet one or more of the criteria listed below:

- internal shared hallways (not porches)
- internal shared stairways or corridors
- shared balconies and fully
- partially enclosed external access/egress routes serving
- shared communal spaces

We will maintain up-to-date records ensuring that all fire protection equipment is maintained and a suitably qualified contractor appointed to undertake cyclical maintenance at least annually or in accordance with manufactures guidance or the fire risk assessment.

All contractors carrying out work in Ealing Council homes and communal areas must carry out a risk assessment and compile a method statement. No works can begin until the method statement for the activity has been approved by the building safety team.

Contractors are required to immediately report any fire related risks

or concerns to the council and stop ongoing works if the concern is significant or needs immediate action.

## **12. Monitoring, compliance, and review**

The day-to-day responsibility for fire safety for Ealing Council's homes is 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 of the housing and environment directorate against targets of key performance indicators namely:

- percentage of homes with a valid fire risk assessment
- overdue FRA actions – high, medium and low priority
- of all blocks and non-dwellings requiring a FRA, % with an assessment at the end of the month

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 all work is carried out to a standard of competence that will keep our residents safe in their homes.

This document will be reviewed following any significant incident or change in legislation and at least every 6 months from the date it is introduced to allow for the impact of the Building Safety Act 2022, Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and Fire Safety Act 2021 to be considered.

## **13. Audit**

The assistant director of housing asset management will arrange for the management of fire safety to be audited and reviewed at least every 2-3 years implemented in line with this policy has been delegated, via the chief executive.

The audit and review may be carried out internally or by an external consultant, however, the auditor will be deemed to be competent by the assistant director of housing asset management.

The audit/review will take account of all policies and procedures, fire risk assessments and reviews, fire risk actions, outcomes and all records associated with the system.

A written report will be prepared by the assistant director of housing asset management to the strategic director of housing and environment to detail the findings of the audit/review, highlighting any non-conformances and/or areas for improvement and making recommendations and suggestions.

## **14. Governance**

Ealing Cabinet has an overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented to ensure compliance with the law.

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 assigned and managed.

The day-to-day responsibility for fire prevention and fire precautions (for the council's housing stock) that are implemented in line with this policy has been delegated, via the chief executive, to the strategic director of housing and environment.

The fire safety management plan also identifies the roles and responsibilities of those who are delegated to undertake the day-to-day tasks on behalf of the strategic director of housing and environment.

## 15. Legal framework

There is a significant raft of legislation and regulation around the prevention of fire in residential buildings that has developed over the years some of which is already in place and some due to be in force shortly, this policy takes account of all statutory requirements as at the date of implementation and includes:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, particularly Section 3: General duties of Employers and Self-employed persons other than their employees
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Housing Act 2004, which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Building Safety Act 2022

## 16. Associated policies and procedures

Building safety policy

Electrical safety policy

Gas safety policy

Fire safety management plan

Building safety management plan

Housing household vulnerability and reasonable adjustments Policy

## **17. Implementation**

Implementation of this policy is through the fire safety management plan and associated procedures.