

COMPANY NAME:

Hillcrest Homes

POLICY NUMBER:

AM03

POLICY TITLE:

Fire Safety Management Policy

This document can be produced in different formats, for example, in larger print or audio-format, and in other languages, as appropriate. We promote equality through seeking to eliminate unlawful and unfair treatment on the ground of any protected characteristic, as appropriate.

Underpinning and Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Other Policies and Procedures:

- AM03 Fire Safety Management Procedure
- G27 Health and Safety Policy
- D01 Development Policy
- G17 Procurement Policy
- F01 Financial Regulations
- G18 Records Management Policy

Main Legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
- Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019
- The Housing (Scotland Act) 2001, 2006 and 2010
- Building (Scotland) Act 2003
- Building (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2025
- HMO Licensing (Housing (Scotland) Act 2006)
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
- The Reporting of Incidents and Dangerous Occurrences regulations (RIDDOR) 2013

- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended)
- The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Scottish Government's Repairing Standard
- The Workplace (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Private Housing (Tenancies)(Scotland) Act 2016
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014

Industry Standards:

- Building (Scotland) Regulations Technical Handbook
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Care Homes
- Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Existing Non-Residential Premises
- Practical Fire Safety for Existing Specialised Housing and Similar Premises
- British Standards
- Further applicable detailed standards are listed in the supporting Procedure
- Letting Agent Code of Conduct

1. Policy Statement

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear statement of Hillcrest's policy for the management of fire safety in residential and commercial buildings owned and managed by Hillcrest as an employer and landlord (employee and tenant & resident safety).

Hillcrest recognises that fire can present a major risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, our customers, and others within the properties we own and manage, if not managed safely. Fire safety incidents can cause injury, loss of life, significant damage to property and also pose significant financial and reputational risks to our organisation.

This policy and the supporting fire safety Procedure, provide a robust fire safety framework which will be implemented to protect the safety and wellbeing of our tenants, staff, contractors, visitors, and firefighters (when in attendance for firefighting duties within our properties). Both documents will enable us to comply with all applicable fire legislation and standards, and when implemented, should enable Hillcrest to manage the risk of fires starting and spreading within our properties.

This Policy applies to all areas of Hillcrest – Hillcrest Homes, Hillcrest Enterprises, Hillcrest Futures and Hillcrest Maintenance. We have different responsibilities across the different group businesses which are detailed further in the Fire Safety Management Procedure which should be read in conjunction with this policy

This policy applies to all 'domestic and non-domestic' (residential and non-residential) buildings owned and managed by Hillcrest in terms of general fire safety precautions; this

includes our offices and places of work. This policy also applies to mixed tenure blocks of tenants and owners, but not fully factor owner blocks where we are not the factor. Where we are not the owner or factor of blocks where we have properties, which are within our control of any properties, which are within our control, the responsibility for fire management will be clearly defined within the management agreement. Where a third party manages grouped amenity housing or HMOs, the responsibility for fire management will be clearly defined within the management agreement. Scottish fire legislation applies differently to domestic and non-domestic buildings which is summarised below:

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 are the key pieces of legislation in Scotland regarding fire safety. The 2005 Act provides a broad approach to fire safety and is complemented by more detailed provisions contained in the 2006 Regulations. This legislation covers a wide range of fire safety obligations and expected standards and places a clear duty on employers to carry out Fire Safety Risk Assessments (FRA's) and to ensure the safety of employees/occupants in workplaces and other 'relevant premises', including Multiple Occupancy' buildings (e.g. Houses of Multiple Occupation HMO's) and some other specialised domestic accommodation.

However, most 'normal' domestic premises and their common areas are excluded from this specific duty to carry out a fire risk assessment. The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 mandate that the responsible person ensures equipment for firefighters (like alarms, detectors, emergency routes, and firefighting facilities) is maintained in an efficient state, working order, and good repair, under a suitable maintenance system, to protect firefighters in relevant premises. This includes facilities for the fire brigade (hydrants, smoke ventilation) and general equipment, with duties shared or arranged among building owners/occupiers as needed, to keep them ready for emergency use

The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 in relation to domestic dwellings, Section 93 of this Act requires occupiers to keep common property free of combustible substances and anything which might obstruct egress from and access to the property in the event of fire. The SFRS has power to enter the common property to determine if the duty is being complied with, and if it is not and there is an immediate risk of fire likely to endanger life, to do anything necessary to remove that risk including seizing and retention of items. The SFRS can issue notices requiring occupiers to remove or render safe items or substances in common property. Any person who fails to comply with a notice from the SFRS is guilty of an offence.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; General Duty on Employers

This primary Health and Safety legislation imposes a general duty on employers to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees at work, so far as reasonably practical. This statutory duty is also applicable to "others" who may be affected by the employer's undertakings (i.e., work activity), such as contractors, tenants, neighbours, owners, visitors, and members of the wider general public.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order 2019

Tolerable Standard: Meeting New Standards for Fire and Smoke Detection. The 2019 Order has extended the existing law with regards to fire and smoke detectors. From 1st February 2022, all rented properties in Scotland will be required to meet the new standards for fire and smoke detection, regardless of the tenure. The Order extends the 'tolerable standard'

outlined in Section 86 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987; however, these changes will now apply to all residential properties. Registered Social Landlords will be required to comply with this Order.

This policy applies to all fire safety related work streams associated with protecting life safety and property safety for all places of work, residential premises which are deemed as “relevant Premises” for tenant and resident safety and parts of properties where we have other legal duties (as outlined above). This includes fire risk assessment (where applicable) fire precautions we will take, raising the alarm, all passive fire elements (e.g., fire doors and compartmentation) and all active fire elements (e.g., fire alarms, emergency lighting, sprinklers) for fire safety.

This policy applies to all work streams associated with fire safety both in the work place and for tenant and resident safety, including:

- Site fire risk assessments conducted by a competent person (to applicable properties) and periodic reviews of the assessments
- The completion of remedials resulting from fire risk assessments and reviews
- Estate management and property visits to ensure areas are kept sterile from combustible materials and escape routes are kept clear.
- Fire precautions we will take
- Raising the alarm in the event of a fire
- Our fire evacuations strategy for relevant buildings
- The provision and maintenance of Passive fire elements within our buildings (e.g. fire doors and compartmentation etc.)
- The provision and maintenance of Active fire elements within our buildings (e.g. Fire alarms, emergency lighting, sprinklers, extinguishers, dry/wet risers etc.)
- Temporary fire arrangements for building refurbishment works and modifications to any active or passive fire safety elements.
- Any maintenance, repairs or investment works which will affect the fire safety arrangements or compartmentation of our buildings.
- Acquisition of new properties and ensuring the fire safety arrangements are understood and verified as part of the hand over process.

This Policy applies to all Hillcrest staff, the Committee and Board members, tenants, owners, contractors, and any visitors to our buildings including members of the public.

This policy does not apply to properties where we have established and confirmed that we are not responsible for fire safety.

The policy will demonstrate how it will make every effort to minimise any risk to the health and safety of its employees, tenants, contractors, and the public from fire in its premises.

This policy outlines the current position, however, it is the intention of Hillcrest to review and amend this policy every five years or sooner if there is a change in statutory legislation, to reflect changes in both fire legislation and Hillcrests fire safety management procedures.

2. Principles

Aims and objectives:

The aim of this policy (which is supported by the Fire Safety Management Procedure), is to ensure that Hillcrest recognises the duties we have to comply with, as a landlord and an employer, for all relevant fire legislation and regulatory standards.

The objectives of this policy (and the Fire Safety Management Procedure) are to:

- Recognise and outline the risks to lives and property associated with the management of fire safety
- Identify all applicable legislation relating to our organisation in terms of fire safety statutory duties and responsibilities as a social landlord within all properties we own and manage, and as an employer within all of our places of work.
- Determine the scope of how the policy will apply to our organisation and how the legislation applies to us.
- For all Properties across Hillcrest, define and validate our legal duty to carry out a fire risk assessment and determine the review frequency.
- Where we do not have a legal duty to carry out a fire risk assessment, determine which properties will receive a fire risk assessment to enable us to manage the fire risks appropriately (including carrying out periodic reviews).
- Outline the control measures we will implement to eliminate or reduce the associated fire risks to life and property
- Outline the roles, responsibilities, training, awareness and management arrangements we will have in place to manage fire safety effectively.
- Outline how we will implement the policy and how we will assure ourselves that we comply with the legislation and the policy and how we will remain compliant.
- Ensure that our arrangements for fire safety are clear and understood by all employees.

To achieve these aims and objectives Hillcrest will:

- Ensure we appoint suitably competent contractors and train specific competent staff to enable us to understand fire safety risks and the actions we need to take to keep customers, staff, and others safe to comply with our obligations as a landlord & employer in relation to fire risk.
- Ensure that we identify all properties we own or manage which require a fire risk assessment (FRA) and ensure these are completed by a demonstrably competent individual in line with all competency guidelines and to a suitable and sufficient standard.
- Ensure that all findings from the FRA are recorded and reviewed, all management actions and remedial actions will be efficiently scheduled and completed within the timeframes specified (where practicable).

- Ensure we provide appropriate information to tenants. We will ensure residents and employees are clear on what the evacuation procedure is for each building occupied through appropriate communications and signage.
- Make the best use of our systems and databases to ensure that FRA review cycles and subsequent remedial and management actions are managed in a consistent manner, This will enable us to report and provide adequate assurance that we comply with all relevant legislation and this policy.
- Where the risk assessment specifies, we will provide adequate passive and active fire precautions as outlined in the policy scope.
- Ensure all passive and active fire safety assets are designed, installed and maintained by competent people and all equipment is maintained to the required standards and frequency in line with British Standards.
- Ensure all properties have escape routes kept free from obstructions and combustible materials to enable access and egress, prevent fires from starting and spreading and to enable safe and efficient evacuation, including liaison with residents and employees to ensure appropriate awareness is in place. By doing so, we will also ensure fire fighters are able to access the buildings safely and access equipment as required.
- Ensure all domestic properties have adequate smoke detection in line with the Tolerable Standard and these are tested and maintained appropriately.
- Ensure that there are clearly appointed accountabilities, roles, and responsibilities to manage fire safety across the business.
- Ensure there are suitable levels of governance, oversight, and supervision to implement this policy and the associated Procedure inclusive of making these available to all relevant staff and ensuring that staff with fire safety roles have read and understood the content and what is expected of their role.
- Foster and maintain good working relationships with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) to ensure the safety of our tenants, owners, contractors and visitors. We will comply with any notice served on us by the local fire authority and carry out any required work as soon as is practical.
- Ensure that we support tenants in line with the Equality Act to understand individual abilities and requirements in terms of reasonable adjustments to homes and communal areas. We, or designated third parties, will also ensure we conduct person centred fire risk assessments (PCFRA's) and personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) where required (for example in grouped amenity housing and HMO's) and will ensure the fire and rescue service are aware of any relevant information. A personal emergency evacuation plan will be prepared for any tenant who has a disability that impacts on their ability to evacuate their place of home.
- Ensure there are suitable and sufficient emergency procedures in place to deal with emergency situations as a result of issues associated with fire safety.
- Ensure that we manage data robustly to assure ourselves that we are accurately and robustly fulfilling our statutory responsibilities as an employer and a landlord relating to fire safety management across the business and respond promptly to failures in systems and data management.
- Ensure that if a fire occurs a full investigation is conducted which will involve notifying our insurers, identifying if there is anything we can do to improve fire

safety precautions and arrangements and reviewing and updating the fire safety policy and procedure.

- Ensure we work with all regulatory, statutory, and enforcing authorities, including the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities.

3. Responsibilities

For further detailed roles and responsibilities across Hillcrest, please refer to the supporting Fire Safety Management Procedure. The main overarching fire safety roles and responsibilities are listed below:

Committee and Board Members

- The Operations Sub-committee has responsibility for approving and reviewing the policy to ensure that fair and equitable processes are being followed.

Executive Leadership Team

- In relation to the Fire (Scotland) Act section 53 (Duties of employers to employees) and section 54 (Duties in relation to relevant premises), the Group Chief Executive will be the duty holder for fire safety with the Director of Finance and Property taking delegated responsibilities for fire safety.
- The Director of Finance and Property retains the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Policy and for ensuring that this policy and its procedures are resourced adequately and reviewed as appropriate. They will delegate further fire safety responsibilities to other Hillcrest staff to deliver fire safety arrangements.

Head of Asset Management

- Will ensure that the register of all fire risk assessments required and register of fire assets that require any form of inspection, maintenance or repairs which are contained within the Hillcrest QL property database, are kept up to date and the information is accurately recorded and maintained and is easily retrievable.
- Will ensure that the requirements of the policy are communicated to all relevant staff and tenants and must reinforce such communication on a regular basis.
- Will be responsible for ensuring suitable levels of assurance and reporting are in place to demonstrate Hillcrest are complying with statutory legal requirements.

Head of Hillcrest Maintenance

- Will ensure that Hillcrest Maintenance are resourced to deliver fire safety related work (under their remit) to the required frequencies and standards
- Will ensure that all appropriate staff receive adequate and continued fire safety training in relation to their role and are encouraged to develop and promote safe working practices and attitudes towards fire safety.

Head of Development

- Is responsible for ensuring that fire safety requirements are fully integrated into the design, construction, and handover of new build and acquired properties.
- Will ensuring that flatted and multi-occupied buildings are supported by a building-specific Fire Strategy, including a documented cause-and-effect matrix where fire safety systems are installed, and that all fire safety information and certification is received and confirmed as compliant prior to handover
- Will ensure a fire risk assessment or initiating a fire risk assessment to be carried out pre-occupation of new buildings where required (relevant premises and where Hillcrest require a fire risk assessment to be completed.

The Health and Safety Team

- Are responsible for auditing and ensuring compliance with fire legislation.
- Are responsible for completing fire risk assessments in less complex premises
- Are responsible for supporting or delivering the review process for all fire risk assessments across the business
- Are responsible for auditing fire safety measures across the business
- Will support Hillcrest in all aspects of fire safety. The Senior Health and Safety Advisor within this team has been appointed as the “Competent Person” under Regulation 17(1) of the Fire (Scotland) Regulations 2006 to assist Hillcrest in undertaking the measures necessary to comply with all appropriate fire legislation.

4. Complaints

We aim to provide a first-class service but it is possible that tenants or other customers may not be satisfied by the outcome of this procedure or any appeal made. Anyone who is affected by the implementation of Hillcrest’s policies and procedures can make a complaint; this would include a member of the public who could have access to or be affected by our services. Complaints can be made in person at any of our offices, by phone, in writing, email or by using our complaints form.

Document Governance and Management

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