



**01.18.PO018 – Fire Safety Policy**

# Health and Safety Policy Document



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| <b>Target Audience</b>                       | Emh and all associated operating businesses |

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|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Approved By</b>   | Strategic H&S Committee |
| <b>Date Approved</b> | 21/01/2022              |
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\* This policy and associated documentation shall be reviewed every five years or as a result of statutory or operational change.

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| <b>Links to Regulatory Standards – Economic/ Consumer Standards</b>                                      |
| <b>Outcomes for Customers</b>                                                                            |
| <b>How were tenants, residents and service users involved in the review/development of this document</b> |
| <b>Training Provision</b>                                                                                |
| <b>Links to the Business Plan</b>                                                                        |
| <b>Links to Key Values</b>                                                                               |

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## Version Control

| Version | Revision Date | Author:<br>Job Title           | Change Description                                                                          |
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| v01     | 12/12/2013    | Carolyn Allin –<br>H&S Manager | Initial Document.                                                                           |
| v02     | 01/12/2016    | Carolyn Allin –<br>H&S Manager | Review Only.                                                                                |
| v3.1    | 04/03/2020    | Carolyn Allin –<br>H&S Manager | Changed to current document template and updated links. Changed document number from HS018. |
| v3.2    | 21/11/2020    | Carolyn Allin –<br>H&S Manager | Review and minor amendments specifically around reconciliation and consultation.            |
| v4.1    | 21/01/2022    | Carolyn Allin –<br>H&S Manager | Amended to reflect new emh branding, review and re-dated (no text changes made).            |
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Fire has the potential to cost lives, cause serious injuries and extensive damage to property, however most fires are entirely preventable.
- 1.2 The [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) 2005](#) came into force on 1 October 2006 to specify the legal duties of responsible persons, including employers for preventing and controlling risk of fire in the workplace.
- 1.3 Emh is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees and residents in line with legal responsibilities. As such, it is necessary to ensure that our employees, sub-contractors, tenants and any others who can be affected by our work practices are not exposed to harm from fire within our owned or managed properties and all company buildings and communal areas.
- 1.4 This policy outlines the controls necessary to prevent or reduce the potential for harm from fire within our business premises and is based upon the requirements of health and safety and fire legislation, approved codes of practice, industry standards and guidance. It has further taken into consideration key points from Dame Judith Hackitt's review of the building regulation's and fire safety.

## 2. Scope and Objectives

- 2.1 This policy applies to emh and all associated subsidiaries and operating businesses. The scope of this policy includes all company owned buildings (offices, plant rooms, warehouses, compounds, stores etc.) and managed properties including communal and shared areas.
- 2.2 The objectives of this fire policy are to ensure that the company is complying with its legal duties in ensuring that:
  - ▶ Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are performed to identify general fire precautions to be taken.
  - ▶ Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire in premises.
  - ▶ Measures are taken to reduce the risk of fire spread in premises.
  - ▶ Measures are taken to detect fires in premises.
  - ▶ Measures are taken to give warning in the event of a fire in premises.
  - ▶ Measures are taken to ensure that means of escape are provided in premises.
  - ▶ Means of escape can always be effectively and safely used.
  - ▶ Firefighting equipment is available and appropriate, where required for fighting fires.
  - ▶ Dangerous or flammable substances are appropriately stored to prevent or reduce risk of combustion to acceptable levels.
  - ▶ Employees and any other persons who can be affected are trained and instructed of safety arrangements to be followed in the event of fire; and,
  - ▶ Measures are taken to mitigate the effects of fire.

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- 2.3 In addition, the objectives aim to minimise damage to property and to regularly monitor, assess and review site specific performance against this policy.

### 3. Legal Considerations and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Emh and associated operating businesses have a legal duty to protect their employees and any other persons who can be affected by their work operations under [The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#). This includes tenants in owned and managed properties and sub-contractors working on our behalf.
- 3.2 Further to this, [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) also places a duty upon employers and landlords to carry out fire risk assessments in any workplace or residential premises with common parts (such as a block of flats or house in multiple occupation).
- 3.3 Under [The Housing Act 2004](#), the housing authority will inspect properties if they become aware of significant fire hazards. Housing authorities have powers of entry for this purpose.
- 3.4 In line with legal requirements, it is the responsibility of the Directors of emh and associated operating businesses to ensure that this policy is properly installed and complied with. Some responsibility in relation to compliance can be delegated but accountability remains at Director level.
- 3.5 Specific roles within the business will be nominated to oversee fire safety arrangements at all sites, including organisation of regular inspection and maintenance of fire detection and alarm systems and to ensure timely and safe evacuation of persons from affected areas and buildings.
- 3.6 All employees, sub-contractors, tenants and visitors to company premises are required to comply with the requirements of this policy and all associated site-specific risk assessments and procedures.
- 3.7 Emh, all associated operating businesses, and managed and owned tenanted properties pose a variety of risks from fire depending upon the operations carried out at each site and the differences in layout and construction. As such, it is necessary for emh, each operating business and owned or managed premises to be considered separately to identify potential risks and ensure that appropriate control is installed to prevent harm to employees and other persons who can be affected by fire.
- 3.8 This policy, in combination with risk assessments and site-specific procedures must be communicated to all employees, contractors, residents and other persons who may be vulnerable to fire in any of our company premises. Any changes or updates to this policy and site-specific procedures must also be communicated to all affected persons as necessary.

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- 3.9 All persons present on company sites are required to comply with all aspects of this policy to assure their own safety and the safety of colleagues and other persons in the event of an emergency. This requires good housekeeping procedures to be adopted to prevent obstruction of emergency routes and exits to allow timely escape from buildings.

## 4. Policy

- ▶ We will appropriately train all our employees.
- ▶ We will engage a competent person to conduct our fire risk assessments.
- ▶ We will adequately invest resources in fire safety.
- ▶ We will embed a proactive fire safety culture into our employees working practices.
- ▶ We will report annually on the lessons learned from fire related incidents to emh's Strategic Health and Safety Committee.
- ▶ We will run an annual fire safety awareness campaign ensuring it is inclusive for all relevant minority groups.
- ▶ We will maintain our engagement in a primary authority scheme.
- ▶ We will produce fire safety provisions, procedures, instruction and safe systems of work.
- ▶ We will provide adequate instruction and define individual and collective responsibilities.
- ▶ We will produce clear reporting procedures to maintain fire safety compliance.
- ▶ We will ensure that all works being undertaken in our properties are conducted in accordance with fire safety best practice.

## 5. Risk Analysis, Priority Ratings and Fire Risk Ratings

- 5.1.1 Risk assessment is a fundamental part of fire safety and is a legal requirement in line with [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#). Fire risk assessments consider the risks to which persons are exposed to determine the precautions that need to be taken to prevent danger or harm. Wherever possible, risks should be prevented, however where this is not feasible, it is necessary to reduce risks as much as possible to acceptable levels.
- 5.1.2 It is necessary for emh, each operating business and owned or managed premises to be considered separately to identify potential risks and ensure that appropriate control is installed to prevent harm to employees and other persons who can be affected by fire.
- 5.1.3 Further information on considerations to be made can be found in emh's fire safety procedures document.
- 5.1.4 Fire risk assessments must be documented and reviewed in line with the organisation's fire safety procedures.

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## 5.2 Review Period

5.2.1 Based on the above and external fire safety advice, emh's current fire risk assessment (FRA) programme and FRA review programme, is as follows:

### 5.2.1a 1-Year Review:

5.2.1b Properties deemed by emh to be high risk. These include sheltered housing schemes, supported housing schemes (registered care and supported living) and purpose-built blocks of flats which exceed five-storeys in height and other premises considered.

### 5.2.1c 2-Year Review:

5.2.1d Properties deemed by emh to be lower risk. These include office / commercial buildings and purpose-built blocks of flats (lower than five-storeys).

## 5.3 Risk Management

5.3.1 Assessing risk is subjective by its nature; the table below provides guidance for determining levels of risk identified following a FRA based on the likelihood of a fire and the potential consequences.

### 5.3.1a Table 1 - Fire Risk Matrix:

The following simple risk level estimator is based on a more general health and safety risk level estimator of the type contained in BS 18004: 2008 or subsequent amendments.

| Likelihood of Fire | Potential Consequences of Fire |               |              |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
|                    | Slight harm                    | Moderate harm | Extreme harm |
| Low                | Trivial                        | Tolerable     | Moderate     |
| Medium             | Tolerable                      | Moderate      | Substantial  |
| High               | Moderate                       | Substantial   | Intolerable  |

5.3.1b All actions identified following the completion of a FRA are assigned a priority level based on the type, complexity and use of a building. The table below identifies the timescales for completing actions based on the assigned priority.

### 5.3.1c Table 2 - (Priority Ratings and Recommended Timescales):

| Individual Recommendation Priorities |                               | Risk Level                                                                            | Recommended Timescales |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| H                                    | (High)                        | All Risk Levels                                                                       | 6 Months               |
| M                                    | (Medium)                      | All Risk Levels                                                                       | 12 Months              |
| L                                    | (Low)                         | All Risk Levels                                                                       | 24 Months              |
| R                                    | (Recommended / Good practice) | All Risk Levels                                                                       | Unlimited              |
| "Pr"                                 | Prefix                        | Previously recommended and not complete. If not programmed the above timescales apply |                        |

5.3.1d Any FRA actions not completed within the recommended timescales will be placed on a short term works programme. The performance against the target completion dates will be reported to the Strategic Health and Safety Committee and emh Board.

## 5.4 Probability of Fire

5.4.1 The Probability of Fire depends on the number and nature of ignition sources along with the extent of any fire prevention measures in place and the nature and actions of the occupants. The 'Probability' and 'Extent of Harm' should a fire occur, depends on the quality of the means of escape, number of storeys, complexity of the premises and mobility of the occupants.

## 6. Fire Safety Management Structure

6.1.1 The fire safety management team will consist of the fire safety duty holders for each department as identified in the chart in [appendix 1](#).

6.1.2 The function of the fire safety management team will be to:

- ▶ Progress and develop fire safety arrangements.
- ▶ Respond to actions delegated to them as identified in the fire risk assessments.
- ▶ Record the progress and performance of fire safety management.
- ▶ Prioritise and progress fire related programmes of work.
- ▶ Ensure that relevant and appropriate fire safety training is provided for all staff.
- ▶ This Policy outlines the measures which the organisation will take to progress fire safety management to the highest possible standards.

### 6.2 Strategic Fire Safety Committee

6.2.1 The fire safety management team will meet each quarter at the Strategic Fire Safety Committee. The minutes from the strategic meetings will be made available to the operational and strategic Health and Safety Committees.



## 6.3 Development of a Fire Safety Culture

- 6.3.1 The significant findings of the fire risk assessment should be communicated to all employees and relevant persons where possible and applicable so that the organisation enters into and develops a culture of fire safety awareness. Employees should understand the need to report any potential fire safety hazards and acts or omissions to senior management and / or the responsible person for fire safety.
- 6.3.2 All employees have a responsibility to adhere to the fire safety policy and are required to have an understanding of emh's fire safety procedures and arrangements. Employees should be aware of the fire safety arrangements in place for the locations they work.

## 7. Training

- 7.1.1 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 stipulates that the responsible person must ensure that their employees are provided with adequate fire safety training. Emh has categorised its training into four separate levels which are defined below:
- ▶ Foundation Level 1 (Includes all employees and temporary staff)
  - ▶ Intermediate Level 2
  - ▶ Advanced Level 3
  - ▶ Basic Fire Safety Awareness (All staff) – Refresher Training
- 7.1.2 The employee / temporary staff's line manager is responsible for ensuring that this level of training is provided. It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that staff have completed the appropriate level of fire safety training. All staff training records are held electronically on the Learning Management System and must be kept up to date.
- 7.1.3 This policy must be communicated to all employees and contractors who may be vulnerable to fire in any of our company premises. Evidence of any training records must be retained on file to demonstrate that all persons are appropriately informed of these provisions. Any changes or updates to this policy and site-specific procedures must also be communicated to all affected persons as necessary.
- 7.1.4 The organisation shall endeavour to communicate site specific fire safety arrangements to all employees, contractors, residents and visitors in line with its fire safety provisions and procedures.

## 7.2 Competency of Fire Risk Assessors

- 7.2.1 [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) is clear in that any person conducting an FRA must be competent to do so. As such, the competency of any individual undertaking a FRA on behalf of emh or its subsidiaries, should be compliant with the accreditation provided by the Fire Safety Competency Council or the Fire Sector Federation.
- 7.2.2 This is in light of several fire related incidents within the sector where poor FRAs have been identified as a significant contributing factor.

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## 8. Monitoring and Reporting Performance

### 8.1 Fire Risk Assessment Programme

- 8.1.1 Within the emh reports will be produced monthly providing progress on the FRA programme by identifying the number of actions outstanding and completed where a FRA has been undertaken. The report will be sent to senior and executive management teams. The report will also contain information on the number of FRA and FRA reviews which are required in line with the review frequency guidelines as detailed in [Section 5](#) of their policy.

### 8.2 Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Servicing / Maintenance

- 8.2.1 All properties containing fire equipment and/or emergency lighting are subject to a 6-monthly testing and servicing regime. The certification is saved electronically by emh and is made available to premises with scheme staff as a paper copy to include in their fire safety file.

### 8.3 Certificate of Safe Environment

- 8.3.1 A Certificate of Safe Environment (COSE) assessment is completed at certain schemes with on-site staff. Part of the assessment will look specifically at fire safety arrangements and recommendations will be made if required. The COSE assessments are carried out on an annual basis.

### 8.4 Reconciliation

- 8.4.1 In order to maintain its data integratory, emh will undertake on a quarterly basis a reconciliation of the relevant Asset Management and Housing Management data bases or relevant systems. The reconciliation will be undertaken by members of the governance team (within emh) and its finding's documented and acted upon by responsible person's. By undertaking this exercise, emh ensures that it meets its statutory duties by maintaining its inspection history of its Fire Risk Assessment.

## 9. Resident Involvement / Engagement

- 9.1.1 Emh will ensure that FRA are available on site within its managed premises. We will also look to regularly publish relevant fire safety information which we will make as widely accessible as possible.

### 9.2 Consultation

- 9.2.1 The policy is driven by legislative requirements; therefore, residents have not been consulted as there are strict regulations that must be met. However, residents are consulted with more generally regarding the repairs, maintenance and planned investment works provided by emh in resident's improvement groups, as emh acknowledges the importance of hearing its residents voice.

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9.2.2 Emh Policies and amendments to Policies are consulted on via its Health and Safety Committees and Trade Unions and 3rd party subject matter experts, to ensure that collective consultation is undertaken prior to approval by emh Executive Management Team.

## 10. Fire Service Engagement

10.1.1 At a corporate level emh will engage in a Primary Authority Partnership with a regional Fire Authority. At a local level scheme managers are encouraged to liaise with their local fire station to enable familiarisation and on-site visits by fire crews.

## 11. Enforcement

11.1.1 The fire and rescue authority for the area in which the premises are located is the enforcing authority for the purpose of [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#). The full details and extent of enforcement and penalties are not listed here, the intention is to raise awareness of the severity of non-compliance.

11.1.2 Inspectors have the power to enter premises where they believe it is necessary to inspect the whole or part of the premises. The inspection forms part of an audit and they may also take copies of records, plans or fire risk assessments.

11.1.3 Generally, any non-compliance of the requirements of [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) will constitute an offence. The fire authority then has the opportunity to issue:

- ▶ A 'notice of recommendations' or an agreed 'action plan' to rectify observed failures.
- ▶ An 'enforcement notice' – this is issued for specified non-compliance and may propose remedies to achieve compliance which must be completed within a stipulated timeframe.
- ▶ A 'prohibition notice' - this is served when the premises has an associated risk to relevant person(s) which means they should be prohibited from using or restricted from a certain part of those premises. A prohibition notice can take immediate effect if the risk is deemed serious. The specified breach and remedy will be identified and the notice will not be lifted until the breach is rectified.

11.1.3a Penalties for non-compliance can vary from substantial fines to imprisonment.

## 12. No Access

12.1.1 [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) places a duty upon employers and landlords to carry out fire risk assessments in any workplace or residential premises with common parts (such as a block of flats or house of multiple occupation). The fire risk assessor will seek to access flats off the communal area and individual rooms within an HMO as part of the inspection process. The assessor will then determine what actions are necessary in order to comply with current legislation and guidance relating to fire safety. These actions may require access into resident's homes as well as the common parts of a building.

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12.1.2 In endeavouring to comply with fire safety legislation, the issue of access to a resident's property may become a factor. As such, compliance with the access arrangements as set out in emh's Fire Safety Procedures will be required when issues arise.

12.1.3 Further enforcement action may be undertaken by Housing & Neighbourhoods, with the expectation that any breach of a tenancy or leasehold agreement that is restricting legal fire safety compliance, will be formally addressed.

## 13. Related Documents and Links

- ▶ [The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- ▶ [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- ▶ Site specific Fire Risk Assessments
- ▶ Site specific Fire Procedures, Safe Systems of Work or Method Statements
- ▶ Site specific Fire Evacuation Plans
- ▶ [The Housing Act 2004](#)
- ▶ [LACORs - Housing - Fire Safety Document](#)
- ▶ [GOV.UK – Fire Prevention and Rescue Series:](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: 5-Step Checklist](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Factories and Warehouses](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Means of Escape for Disabled People](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Offices and Shops](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Residential Care Premises](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Sleeping Accommodation](#)
  - ▶ [Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Small and Medium Places of Assembly](#)

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## 14. Appendices

### 14.1 Appendix 1 – emh Fire Safety Management

