

# Housing and Safer Communities Policy



**Division – Repairs and Investment**

## Electrical Safety Policy

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**Document Owner** – Electrical Operations Manager

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## **1. Policy Objective**

- 1.1 The Royal Borough of Greenwich (the council) is committed to ensuring that our residents homes, communal areas, and offices in residential buildings are safe and secure places to live and work.
- 1.2 The Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2021-2026 sets out the overarching principles and key aims for housing services for the provision of safe, secure, and affordable homes. This is divided into five key strands of which this policy sits within: -
  - Strand 1 - Ensuring the supply of high-quality homes and
  - Strand 4 – Safe and sustainable homes for all.
- 1.3 This policy sets out local arrangements that are in place by Housing and Safer Communities (HSC) and how we intend to meet our legislative and other obligations as a landlord, employer and client providing assurances that the management of electrics is safely managed. We aim to ensure that our residents, the public, employees, and contractors are not exposed to any electrical risks that may impact on their health, safety, and wellbeing.
- 1.4 This policy does not replace any corporate policies or arrangements in relation to electrical safety but provides additional assurances where the use and electrical installation owned and maintained by the HSC may cause harm to persons in residential properties.
- 1.5 This policy sets out how HSC will ensure that relevant electrical installations are correctly managed and periodically examined in line with current legislation, approved codes of practice and British standards.

## **2. Context**

- 2.1 The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 requires HSC to ensure that any relevant electrical installations are periodically inspected and tested so that they are maintained in a safe condition. Section 4 of this policy outlines the principal legislation governing this policy.
- 2.2 This policy covers all residential properties, communal areas, and commercial properties. This will be delivered through: -
  - ensuring that suitable risk assessments have been completed and necessary measures are implemented to mitigate risk to residents, employees, and contractors.
  - carry out regular electrical tests and maintenance for all residential, communal, including residential properties and shared spaces within commercial blocks where HSC has responsibility.
  - having suitable management processes and systems in place.
  - appointing an Electrical Delivery Manager competent person for managing systems to ensure the implementation of electrical safety
  - the provision of suitable training for relevant employees

- 2.3 The policy applies to all employees and contractors undertaking electrical work on HSCs behalf and anyone likely to be at risk from any electrical works in any of the council's residential properties.
- 2.4 HSC takes the health, safety and wellbeing of its residents and employees seriously. It is our policy to exceed, where possible, the minimum health and safety standard required by law.
- 2.5 The council is the 'Duty Holder' under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and the Chief Executive is accountable for undertaking or delegating the responsibilities and duties under Regulation 3.
- 2.6 The Chief Executive has delegated their responsibility to the Director of Housing and Safer Communities and has appointed a Senior Assistant Director for Repairs and Investment division to assist in the delivery, implementation, and compliance of this policy.
- 2.7 The Senior Assistant Director of Repairs and Investment and the Head of Landlord Risk and Compliance are responsible for the appointment of a competent person, who will be known as the Electrical Delivery Manager, for the effective management of electrical risks and where appropriate to report or escalate concerns to the Head of Landlord Risk and Compliance. The main competencies for the Electrical Delivery Manager role will be identified in the posts Person Specification.
- 2.8 The Director of Housing and Safer Communities is responsible to the councils Chief Executive and the council's cabinet members for ensuring the effective delivery, implementation, and compliance of this policy.
- 2.9 HSC's Assurance Framework maps out the governance regime for both officers and cabinet members to ensure HSC meets its regulatory obligations by being visible and accountable for resident safety and the delivery of improvements. The Audit and Risk Management Panel will be responsible for ensuring that the council's cabinet members receive the assurances it requires.
- 2.10 HSC will have relevant procedures in place for the management of electricians in its domestic and non-domestic dwellings, and communal areas which will provide guidance and a consistent approach for the management of electricians safely in its properties, including gaining access to properties where it is required.
- 2.11 Employees who have an identified role in undertaking related electrical procedure or works will receive training appropriate to their role, including any refresher training. The Electrical Safety Delivery Manager appointed as the competent person must be trained to at least NVQ level 3 Electrotechnical.

### **3. Key Policy Points**

3.1 HSC will comply with all relevant legislation to meet our electrical safety obligations to protect our residents, their visitors, employees, and contractors from any risk to health and safety.

### 3.2 **Management of Electrical Safety Duties**

HSC will ensure the following general electrical safety precautions are implemented and will: -

- appoint a qualified and competent person to lead the management of electrical safety and ensure compliance is achieved and maintained.
- appoint and use appropriately qualified employees or contractor to undertake inspections and testing of installations and provide an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR), upon request.
- complete a 5-year periodic electrical tests for all residential, communal, including residential properties and shared spaces within commercial blocks where HSC is responsible (or more frequently if necessary).
- undertake electrical inspection and testing at the end of each tenancy or when there is a change in tenancy.
- carry out any necessary remedial work to make the electrical installation safe within the recommended time outlined in the EICR
  - Category One defects must be addressed immediately and the installation made safe prior to an operative leaving the premises.
  - Category Two defects must be addressed as soon as reasonably practicable. Minor works will normally be completed whilst the operative is in the premises subject to time and material constraints as well as delegated financial authorisation limits. Typically, this will be within a maximum of 28 days of the original test
  - Category Three issues are observations only. HSC may choose to address these as part of a planned programme or wait until the next planned upgrade of the electrical installation
- test portable electrical appliances where supplied, but not gifted to resident, until residents main heating supplied is restored.
- minimise the inconvenience to residents caused by the inspection, testing and any associated remedial electrical works.
- test building network operating system for communal blocks, all subcircuits from landlords' distribution boards and consumer units and final circuits for individual dwellings.
- carry out post inspections to monitor the quality of works undertaken.
- ensure an appropriate programme of improvement is in place to maintain the safety of stock and to keep residents safe in their homes.

### 3.3 **Contract Management**

In line with the council's Procurement Procedure, where appropriate HSC will: -

- appoint suitably qualified contractors to carry out necessary electrical works and inspections, minimum levels of competence and qualification are specified in tender documentation as checked as part of procurement processes
- ensure that any in-house staff completing electrical works are suitably qualified and competent to undertake such works. Minimum levels of competence and

qualifications are specified in job descriptions and role profiles.

- general levels of competence and qualification are recorded in procedural documents where relevant.
- ensure accreditation certificates are verified with the appropriate bodies prior to any appointment, normally the NICEIC competent persons scheme or another of equal and equivalent standing.
- conduct regular monthly minuted meetings with contractors to review contract goals, track and follow up actions arising, as well as monitor performance
- ensure that contractors are performing in line with contract requirements.
- carryout post inspections to monitor the quality of work

### **3.4 Failure to Access Properties**

If the contractor is unable to gain access to a property to carry out service or any emergency works, HSC will review the reason for this and explore other appropriate and reasonable ways to gain access.

- 3.5 If access to a property is not achieved for a prolonged period, HSC will seek an injunction to gain access to the property to carry out this work, to ensure our residents are safe. In such cases access will be gained in line with HSCs Access to Properties Procedure.

### **3.6 Electric Vehicles**

HSC will ensure that any changes to our properties and attributed spaces are carried out to a standard that is acceptable to the Council. To ensure that work is carried out to a suitable standard HSC will: -

- review and consider work to be carried out for the installation of any electric charging points for electric cars or electric vans, including the contractor completing the work, prior to consent.
- receive and store appropriate certificates once the work has been completed.
- ensure the location of the charging point is on the resident's wall and not a shared wall, also that no trailing leads enter communal areas.
- if the competent person is not satisfied with the certification received from a resident, we will inspect the completion of any installation electric charging point to ensure installation is completed to a satisfactory standard.
- requests for the installation of electric charging points and the satisfactory completion of works will be granted in-line with the Improvements and Permissions Policy.

- 3.7 The charging and storage of other electric vehicles e.g. e-scooters, e-bike, hover boards etc. should be read in conjunction with the Mobility Vehicle Policy.

### **3.8 Resident Responsibilities**

Residents to proactively work in partnership with HSC to help keep them safe from risks associated with electrical hazards by: -

- allowing access for our contractors or in-house team to complete electrical safety tests at least once every five years.
- allowing our contractors to complete any remedial works required to ensure that the electrical installation remains safe.

- not to overload any electrical sockets.
- not to compromise the electrical system of their home or communal areas.
- reporting any concerns with electrical safety to HSC at the earliest opportunity.
- ensuring there are no trailing leads or cables extending from their home on to communal areas.
- seeking permission for the installation of electrical vehicle charging points and supplying HSC with any necessary certificates or guarantees prior to or upon completion of works.
- ensuring any electric vehicle charge point is installed by an accredited installer.
- allowing access to HSC representatives to inspect any works carried out in relation to the installation of any electric vehicle charging point.
- make good or reinstate the premises to its original condition if there is damage to council property or if the electric vehicle charging point is to be removed.
- residents report any vulnerabilities or medical condition of anyone in the household that may be affected by a change in their living environment, while electric related works are carried out and that these are recorded on HSC systems so that appropriate measures can be applied to assist the resident.

### **3.9 Awareness and Communication of Electrical Safety**

HSC will ensure arrangements are in place with contractors and the in-house team so that residents and employees are aware of any testing or maintenance work to electric supply or installations; any disruption or decommission is kept to a minimum and action being taken to rectify the defect, so that the safety of residents are not endangered.

3.10 HSC will protect residents, employees, and contractors, and ensure: -

- information about electrical safety is made available to residents to promote prevention and protective measures against fire and electrocution.
- residents are informed and regularly refreshed about electrical safety procedures.
- upon request provide resident with the latest copy of their properties EICR certificate.
- employees and contractor receive electrical safety training relevant to their role.
- arrangements are in place with the contractors to ensure that relevant resident and employees are aware of any defects identified during a EICR check and the risk of using the electrical points, and action is taken to rectify the defect, so that the safety of residents is not endangered.
- residents and employees are aware of their responsibilities in relation to electrical safety measures.
- information on fuel poverty is made available through RBGs Money Advice Team to help residents manage their fuel bills.

3.11 Where HSC has supplied an electrical appliance the resident and employees must use the appliance in accordance with the instructions, which will be supplied, to avoid misuse. HSC will ensure the appliance is in a safe condition before it is gifted for the residents use and ensure the resident is clear on how to use the appliance.

### **3.12 Keeping Electrical Safety Records**

HSC will keep and maintain: -

- an accurate asset register of all premises where there is an active electrical supply and installation within all residential premises, communal areas, and other HSC premises e.g., caretaking rooms, laundry rooms, etc.
- accurate records of completed electrical inspections and associated notifications for remedial works for a minimum period of 10 years.

## **4. Legislation**

4.1 The principal legislations for this policy are: -

- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Secure Tenants of Local Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- The Charter for Social Housing for Residents (2020)
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- Social Housing Regulations Act 2023

4.2 This list is not exhaustive but contains the main legal duties regarding electrical safety.

4.3 HSC will also comply with all relevant guidance and British Standards that under pin legislation.

4.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation as well as HSCs procedures.

## **5. Implementation and Performance Monitoring**

5.1 The implementation of this policy will be carried out through employee training and briefings. A copy of this policy will be made available on the intranet for review.

5.2 Performance will be monitored and challenged thorough agreed performance indicators and will be reviewed at the following scheduled meetings, subject to review: -

- Directorates Leadership Meeting (DLT)
- Landlord Compliance Group (LCG)
- Compliance and Safety Panel (CSP)
- Compliance Operational Group (COG)
- Electrical Safety Action Group (ESAG)

5.3 HSC will seek independent assurances through internal and external audit processes and outcomes will be published.

- 5.4 This policy will be reviewed annually at the Electric Safety Action Group or following a serious electric related incident or any change in legislation before its scheduled review.
- 5.5 If during the review no amendments are required to the policy, it will be reported to the Compliance Operational Group, the Compliance Safety Panel, and the Landlords Compliance meeting and minuted for audit purposes.