

Electrical Safety Policy



Name	Electrical Safety Policy
Owner	Director of Housing
Last Review	August 2023
Next Review	August 2025
Resident Consultation	TBC
Equality Impact Assessment	August 2023
Cabinet Approval	TBC

Strategic Lead _____

Sign _____

Date _____

Chair of Cabinet _____

Sign _____

Date _____

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1.0 Introduction and Objectives

- 1.1 As a landlord, Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) is responsible for repairs and maintenance to our homes, communal blocks and other properties we own and manage, all of which will contain electrical installations, equipment and portable appliances.
- 1.2 The key objective of this policy is to ensure our Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team, employees, partners and tenants are clear on our legal and regulatory electrical safety obligations. This policy provides the framework our staff and partners will operate within in order to meet these obligations.
- 1.3 This policy forms part of our wider organisational commitment to driving a health and safety culture amongst staff and contractors (as detailed within our Health and Safety Policy). It will be saved on our shared drive and distributed to all relevant members of staff.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
 - The housing assets which are owned by the Housing Revenue Account (the HRA) and any which are leased by the Council and rented and managed as social housing stock. This includes domestic properties (houses and flats), communal areas of any blocks containing such properties, and sheltered and supported housing schemes and associated offices/communal spaces.
 - Any commercial premises which are owned by the HRA.
 - Any depots, operational and commercial buildings owned and / or managed by EFDC.
- 2.2 The policy is relevant to all our employees, tenants, contractors, stakeholders and other persons who may work on, occupy, visit, or use our premises, or who may be affected by our activities or services.
- 2.3 The policy should be used by all to ensure they understand the obligations placed upon EFDC to maintain a safe environment for tenants and employees, within the home of each resident, and within all communal areas of buildings and other properties we own and/or manage. Adherence to this policy is mandatory.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Cabinet has overall governance responsibility for ensuring this policy is fully implemented to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulatory standards. As such, the Cabinet will formally approve this policy and review it every two years (or sooner if there is a change in legislation or regulation).

- 3.2 For assurance that this policy is operating effectively in practice, the Cabinet will receive regular updates on its implementation, electrical safety performance and non-compliance.
- 3.3 The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will receive monthly performance reports in respect of electrical safety and ensure compliance is being achieved. They will also be notified of any non-compliance issue identified.
- 3.4 The Director of Housing has strategic responsibility for the management of electrical safety, and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained. They will oversee the implementation of this policy.
- 3.5 The Service Manager - Assets has operational responsibility for the management of electrical safety and will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of these programmes.
- 3.6 Housing teams will provide support where gaining access to properties is difficult and will assist and facilitate any legal access processes, as necessary.

4.0 Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Standards

4.1 **Legislation** – Principal legislation applicable to this policy is as follows:

- Housing Act 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016.

This policy also operates within the context of additional legislation (see Appendix 1).

4.2 **Guidance and codes of practice** – The principal guidance and codes of practice applicable to this policy are:

- INDG236 - Maintaining portable electrical equipment in low-risk environments (as amended 2013).
- IET Wiring Regulations British Standard 7671:2018 (18th edition).
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electrotechnical Care in Social Housing (Electrical Safety Roundtable) January 2019.
- The Code of Practice for In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (IET) 2020 (5th edition).

4.3 **Regulatory standards** – We must ensure that we comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England; the Home Standard is the primary one applicable to this policy. The Social Housing

(Regulation) Bill will change the way social housing is regulated and may result in future changes to this policy.

- 4.4 **Sanctions** – Failure to discharge our responsibilities and obligations properly could lead to sanctions, including prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (the HSE) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; prosecution under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007; prosecution under any of the principal legislation listed in Section 4.1; and via a regulatory notice from the Regulator of Social Housing.

5.0 Obligations

- 5.1 The Housing Act 2004 requires that properties are free from Category 1 HHSRS hazards; this includes electrical hazards.
- 5.2 The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 place duties on landlords to ensure that electrical installations in rented properties are:
- Safe when a tenancy begins.
 - Maintained in a safe condition throughout the tenancy so the property is fit for habitation.
- 5.3 To comply with these duties, electrical installations are required to be periodically inspected and tested. There is no legal requirement setting out how frequently we must carry out inspections and tests in domestic properties, however the government has consulting during summer 2022 on introducing mandatory checks on electrical installations for social housing at least every five years.
- 5.4 Best practice guidance within the current version of BS7671:2018 (currently BS7671:2018+A2:2022) recommends that electrical installations are tested at intervals of no longer than five years from the previous inspection. This guidance also states that any deviation from a five-year interval should be at the recommendation of a competent person, and should be backed up by sound evidence to support the recommendation.
- 5.5 All electrical installations should be inspected and tested prior to the commencement of any new tenancies. This means that tests should be carried out whilst properties are void and when mutual exchanges and transfers take place, and a satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be issued to the resident upon moving in.
- 5.6 The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 places duties on employers that all electrical installations and appliances within the workplace are safe and that only competent persons work on the electrical installations, systems and equipment.
- 5.7 The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016 requires landlords to ensure that any electrical appliances provided as part of a tenancy are safe when first supplied.

6.0 Statement of Intent

- 6.1 We acknowledge and accept our responsibilities with regards to electrical safety under the legislation and regulations, as outlined in Sections 4 and 5.
- 6.2 We will deliver an electrical inspection and testing programme as set out in Section 7.
- 6.3 We will ensure that all electrical installations are in a satisfactory condition following the completion of an electrical installation inspection and test and will require the production of a condition report or other certificate which confirms that the installation is safe.
- 6.4 We will ensure that a full electrical installation inspection and test is undertaken in the case of a change of occupancy (void properties, mutual exchanges and transfers), and when completing planned works within domestic properties; this will be evidenced through a satisfactory EICR or other report.
- 6.5 We are delivering an installation plan and have a target date of October 2023 to ensure each property has a smoke alarm and carbon monoxide alarm installed. We will install, test and replace (as required) battery/hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms as part of the annual gas safety check visit (or at void stage). Where the property does not have a gas supply, we will do this as part of the electrical inspection test.
- 6.6 We will operate a robust process if there is difficulty gaining access to a property to carry out the electrical safety check or remediation works. We will use the legal remedies available within the terms of the tenancy agreement, lease or license provided the appropriate procedures have been followed and approval given by a Head of Service (or more senior role). Where resident vulnerability issues are known or identified, we will ensure that we safeguard the wellbeing of the resident.
- 6.7 We will ensure that there is a robust process in place for the management of immediately dangerous situations identified from the electrical safety check.
- 6.8 We will operate effective contract management arrangements with the contractors responsible for delivering the service, including; ensuring contracts/service level agreements are in place, conducting client-led performance meetings and ensuring that contractors' employee and public liability insurances are up to date on an annual basis.
- 6.9 We will operate measures to identify, manage and/or mitigate risks related to portable electrical appliances in the properties we are responsible for.
- 6.10 We will carry out a programme of checks to lightning protection, where it is installed, every 12 months.
- 6.11 We will establish and maintain a risk assessment for electrical safety management and operations, setting out our key electrical safety risks and appropriate mitigations.
- 6.12 To comply with the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM), a Construction Phase Plan will be in place for all repairs work to

void and tenanted properties (at the start of the contract and reviewed/updated annually thereafter), component replacement and refurbishment works.

- 6.13 We will ensure there is a robust process in place to investigate and manage all RIDDOR notifications made to the HSE in relation to electrical safety and will take action to address any issues identified and lessons we have learned, to prevent a similar incident occurring again.

7.0 Programmes

- 7.1 We are implementing a programme of five yearly electrical installation inspections and tests, having previously carried these out every 10 years. We carry out these inspections and tests to all domestic properties, communal blocks and other properties within the scope set out in 2.1, and from this point forward the inspection and test will be carried out every five years (unless the competent person recommends an earlier next test date). The person carrying out the test will be required to issue us with a new satisfactory EICR. The date of the next inspection and test is driven from the date of the most recent EICR.
- 7.2 **New builds and properties which have rewires** – All new builds, and all properties which have a rewire, will receive their first electrical installation inspection and test five years after the date of installation, and every five years thereafter.
- 7.3 **Properties managed by others** – We will obtain EICRs where our properties are managed by a third party. If the third party does not provide the EICR, we will carry out the inspection and obtain the EICR, and re-charge them for the cost of this work.

8.0 Follow-up Work

- 8.1 We will endeavour to repair all Code 1 (C1) and Code 2 (C2) defects identified by an electrical installation inspection and test at the time of the check, to produce a satisfactory EICR. Where this is not possible, we will make the installation safe and return to complete the required remediation works within 28 days to ensure a satisfactory EICR is produced.
- 8.2 Further Investigations (FIs) recorded on the EICR will be investigated within 28 days of the date on which the inspection and test was carried out. Any C1 or C2 faults identified as a result of these will be rectified within 28 days.
- 8.3 Where any C1 and C2 defects have been repaired, they will be recorded on the satisfactory EICR to provide an audit of the work completed.
- 8.4 We will review all Code 3 (C3) and observations and determine the most appropriate course of action.

9.0 Data and Records

- 9.1 We will maintain a core asset register of all properties we own or manage, with component/attribute data against each property to show electrical safety testing and inspection requirements.
- 9.2 We will operate a robust process to manage all changes to our assets, including property acquisitions and disposals, to ensure that properties are not omitted from the electrical safety programme and the programme remains up to date.
- 9.3 We will maintain accurate records, against each property we own and/or manage, of the following:
- Inspection dates;
 - Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs);
 - Minor Electrical Works Certificates and Building Regulation Part P notifications associated with remedial works; and
 - Electrical Installation Certificates.
- 9.4 We will hold these in Share Point. We will implement the Civica CX system during 2023, and from that point will hold this information in it.
- 9.5 We will keep at least the two most recent EICR records or certificates outlined within section 9.3. We will have robust processes and controls in place to maintain appropriate levels of security for all electrical safety related data.

10.0 Resident Engagement

- 10.1 We consider good communication essential in the effective delivery of electrical safety programmes, therefore we will establish a resident engagement strategy and communication programme to support tenants in their understanding of electrical safety.
- 10.2 This will assist us in maximising access to carry out electrical inspections, encourage and support tenants to report any concerns about electrical safety, and help us to engage with vulnerable and hard to reach tenants.
- 10.3 We will share information clearly and transparently and will ensure that information is available to tenants via regular publications and information on our website.

11.0 Competent Persons

- 11.1 The Senior Mechanical and Electrical Engineer Operational Assets, as the post responsible for managing day to day delivery of the programme, will hold the Level 4 VRQ in Electrical Safety Management or Level 4 VRQ Diploma in Asset and Building Management (or

equivalent). If they do not have this already, they will obtain it within 12 months of the approval of this policy.

- 11.2 Only suitably competent electrical contractors and operatives, who are registered with an approved competent body (for example the NICEIC, British Standards Institution, ELECSA, BRE Certification or NAPIT Registration) will undertake electrical works on our behalf.
- 11.3 Only suitably competent third-party technical auditors, who are registered with approved competent body (for example the NICEIC, British Standards Institution, ELECSA, BRE Certification or NAPIT Registration), will undertake quality assurance checks.
- 11.4 We will check that our contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations when we procure them, and thereafter on an annual basis; we will evidence these checks and each contractor's certification appropriately.

12.0 Training

- 12.1 We will deliver training on this policy and the procedures that support it, through appropriate methods including team briefings, basic electrical safety awareness training and on the job training for those delivering the electrical safety programme, planned maintenance and repair works as part of their daily job. All training undertaken by staff will be formally recorded.

13.0 Performance Reporting

- 13.1 We will report robust key performance indicator (KPI) measures for electrical safety. These will be provided to SLT monthly and to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis. As a minimum, we will report:

Data – the total number of:

- Properties – split by category (domestic, communal and others);
- Properties on the electrical inspection and testing programme;
- Properties not on the electrical inspection and testing programme;
- Properties with a satisfactory and in date EICR;
- Properties without a satisfactory and in date EICR;
- Completed, in-time and overdue follow-up works/actions arising from the inspection programme.

Narrative - an explanation of the:

- Current position;
- Corrective action required;
- Anticipated impact of corrective action; and
- Progress with completion of follow-up works.

In addition:

- The number of RIDDOR notifications to the HSE with regards to electrical safety.

14.0 Quality Assurance

- 14.1 We will ensure there is a programme of third-party quality assurance audits of electrical safety checks. This will cover new installations (or those which have had upgrades which require a new EICR), sample of field checks and electrical safety certificates. Sampling will be risk-based taking into account the property type and the engineer who carried out the inspection. The minimum sample size will be 5%.
- 14.2 Internally we will undertake a 100 per cent desktop audits of all EICRs and other records and certificates outlined in 9.3.
- 14.3 We will carry out an internal audit of electrical safety at least once every two years, to specifically test for compliance with legal and regulatory obligations and to identify non-compliance issues for correction.

15.0 Significant Non-Compliance and Escalation

- 15.1 Our definition of significant non-compliance is: any incident which has the potential to result in a material breach of legislation or regulatory standard, or which causes a risk to health or safety. All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred, or of an EFDC employee becoming aware of it.
- 15.2 Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to either the Head of Asset Strategy or the Head of Asset Operations in the first instance, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Director of Housing. The Director of Housing will report details of the same to the Senior Leadership Team, EFDC's Monitoring Officer and the Portfolio Holder.
- 15.3 In cases of serious non-compliance, the Portfolio Holder and Senior Leadership Team will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive. In such instances, the issue will also be reported to Cabinet.

16.0 Glossary

- 16.1 This glossary defines key terms used throughout this policy:
- **EICR:** Electrical Installation Condition Report - a formal document that is produced following an assessment of the electrical installation within a property (domestic or

communal). It must be carried out by an experienced qualified electrician or approved contractor.

- **NICEIC:** National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting – an organisation which regulates the training and work of electrical contractors in the UK. The NICEIC is one of several providers given Government approval to offer Competent Person Schemes to oversee electrical work within the electrical industry.

Appendix 1 - Additional Legislation

This policy also operates within the context of the following legislation:

- The Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Occupiers' Liability Act 1984
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Act 2007
- Building Regulations 2010 (England and Wales) - Part P
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018