Loreburn Group

Fire Safety Policy

Policy	Fire Safety							
Version Reference	2.0							
Approved by	MC		LET	X		MT		
Date of Approval	September 2021							
Review Period	Every 3 Years **or** as legislation or substantive changes occur							
Review Due	September 2024							
Policy Champion	Health, Safety & Environment Coordinator							
Who this policy affects	Staff	X	Customers	X	Contractors	X	Members of the Public	X
Where this policy affects	General needs	X	Sheltered	X	Supported	X	Offices/staff base	X

1. Purpose of this Policy

1.1 This policy explains how Loreburn Housing Association will manage the risk posed by fire and fire safety at premises owned, managed, or controlled by Loreburn.

1.2 The policy also ensures compliance with the duties placed upon it by the items of legislation detailed in section 2 of this policy document.

1.3 Loreburn will promote good practice and partnership working in relation to fire safety and the associated risks.

1.4 This policy sets out how we will meet our duty of care to customers, staff and stakeholders in relation to fire safety. This extends to taking all reasonable steps to mitigate any risks associated with fire in domestic and non-domestic properties

2. Aims of this Policy

2.1 To establish procedures to ensure compliance with respective legislation and guidance and protect the health, safety and welfare of our customers, staff, contractors and visitors.

2.2 To establish fire strategies for all premises, particularly in relation to emergency evacuation procedures.

2.3 To promote fire safety in buildings and premises and ensure effective communication with all stakeholders and partner agencies.

2.4 To achieve continuous improvement by setting and monitoring targets and improving performance where practicable.

2.5 To implement processes in an efficient manner and ensure the overall approach meets the provisions of the association's Health & Safety Policy and Risk Management Policy.

2.6 To ensure respective services are procured in line with Loreburn's Procurement and Value for Money (VFM) Strategy, Procurement Policy, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders.

2.7 To have a system in place for prioritising surveys / re-surveys for example planned maintenance works.

2.8 To regularly update Loreburn Executive Team (LET), Health & Safety Executive Group and Management Committee on performance

3. Outcomes

3.1 Risk to customers, staff and others is minimized and statutory duties are met.

3.2 Clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in order to secure fire safety and both corporate and individual compliance with relevant legislation.

3.3 Effective management of fire including fire risk assessments where required including all communal areas of buildings so that the risks from fire are assessed and controlled to reduce residual risk to a tolerable level.

3.4   Effective management of actions outlined in fire risk assessments through reactive repairs, cyclical and planned programmes.

3.5   Servicing and maintenance in accordance with the relevant British Standards of fire safety equipment including fire alarms; emergency lighting; fire extinguishers; smoke vents; sprinkler systems and others so that any aspect of Loreburn premises and any equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety is maintained by a competent person; in a fit and efficient state; in efficient working order and in good repair.

3.6   A robust cyclical maintenance programme linked to fire risk including upgrade and replacement programme of smoke, heat and Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors within individual properties.

3.7   All staff, customers, visitors and contractors are provided with clear and relevant information regarding fire risks and the measures taken to prevent fires occurring or to mitigate against the consequences of fire.

3.8   Loreburn buildings are designed in accordance with relevant standards.

3.9   Staff are properly consulted about policy, procedures and arrangements for fire safety.

3.10   Staff are provided with appropriate information, instruction and training at appropriate intervals about fire safety.

4.   Fire Risk Assessment

4.1   The main purpose of the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) process is to ensure that a methodical and structured approach is applied to assessing the suitability and effectiveness of the fire safety provisions applicable to a relevant premise and the fire hazards within and conclude the most appropriate fire evacuation strategy for the building.

4.2   The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 places a statutory duty on each employer to carry out an assessment of the workplace for the purpose of identifying any risks to the safety of the staff, customers, visitors and others in respect of harm caused by fire. The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, detail the arrangements that are required to meet the requirements of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

4.3   Fire Risk Assessments will be undertaken on communal areas of general needs and Later Living buildings, and all areas of offices and HMO properties.

4.4   Fire risk assessments and reviews will be the responsibility of the Head of Asset Management.

4.5   FRA Reviews will be carried out annually with a full fire risk assessment being carried out based on the frequency identified by the fire risk assessor in the FRA.

4.6   Fire risk assessments must be carried out by a competent person with relevant skills, training and experience and they must have appropriate knowledge of:

- Assessment of risk from fire
- Applicable Legislation
- Appropriate Guidance
- Behaviour of fire in premises

- Effects of fire on people and behaviour of people in fire situations
- Means of Escape
- Fire Prevention
- Fire Protection
- Management of Fire Safety

4.7   When procuring a Fire Risk Assessor, this will be used as key criteria in assessing quality.

5.   Fire Prevention

5.1   Fire safety training and advice will be given to staff on an annual basis including information on preventing fires within Loreburn premises and testing of fire alarms and emergency lighting. This will be through elearning as well as practical training on site.

5.2   Fire safety advice and emergency procedures will be provided to customers when they sign-up for a Loreburn tenancy by providing fire safety leaflets and, for flatted developments, the fire evacuation procedures for the building. Fire safety advice is also included in the Customer Handbook, and annually through social media, newsletters and the website as well as a letter issued directly to customers containing fire safety information for their building along with general fire safety advice.

5.3   Where more vulnerable customers reside, ie. later living developments, we will reinforce fire safety and prevention regularly through customer meetings, when visiting them in their home and always after any fire safety incident or near miss.

5.4   Customers will also be advised by staff of the Home Fire Safety visits offered by the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) and referrals made to the SFRS where staff are concerned for the safety of customers.

5.5   Designs for new build and refurbishment or alteration of properties meets all current legislative and regulatory requirements in fire safety and reduces as far as possible the risks posed by fire.

Fire Safety in Communal Areas

5.6   Communal areas must be kept sterile, i.e. nothing to be placed/kept/stored in communal areas including combustible materials and obstructions which could impede escape in an emergency.

5.7   Door Mats size 40cm wide x 60cm long x 0.5cm thick with a non-slip backing are permitted outside flat doors in communal areas however off-cuts of carpet must NOT be used.

5.8   Communal areas will be monitored during estate management inspections and in Later Living developments as part of the daily H&S inspections.

5.9   All staff must be vigilant when visiting Loreburn premises outwith the monthly checks for fire hazards and risks. Any concerns regarding the fire safety equipment or structure of the premises must be reported using the Adverse Event Reporting system.

Gas & Electrical Safety

5.10 Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) are carried out every 5 years to ensure that installations are safe and to reduce the risk of electrical fires.

5.11 Portable Appliance Testing is also carried out on portable electrical appliances which also reduces the risk of fires.

5.12 Refer to the Electrical Safety Policy & Procedure for more detailed information.

External Waste Containers & Refuse Bins

5.13 External waste containers, refuse bins and industrial skips are a potential fire hazard to all buildings. Fires often occur in such receptacles and where they are placed in close proximity to a building, the potential for fire spread through radiated and convected heat currents is a realistic possibility. We will therefore ensure that waste containers and refuse bins are suitably managed.

5.14 Internal waste chutes are also a fire hazard and will be managed to ensure the risk from these is eliminated, where practicable.

5.15 See also Section 6 of the Fire Safety Procedural Guide for more detailed information.

Deterring Willful Fire Raising

5.16 Whilst willful fire raising cannot be fully preventable, actions can be taken to minimise the risk to the lowest practicable level.

5.17 Some of the issues that may increase the risk of wilful fire raising on Loreburn premises include:

- premises that are unoccupied (either permanently or temporarily) or infrequently visited;

- entrance security issues allowing easy access/egress to premises, e.g. communal doors being left open;

- combustible materials within communal areas or stored/deposited next to buildings.

5.18 Security arrangements and fire detection systems are put in place to prevent unauthorised entry into buildings/areas and to enable prompt response in the event of a fire. Alertness towards general security related principles including the wearing of ID badges, prompt removal and safe disposal of combustible waste sources, and ensuring that areas are kept secure and free from undetected/unauthorised persons will assist in preventing willful fire raising activities.

5.19 Suspicious persons or suspicious activity should never be left unchecked or unreported; security awareness is intrinsically linked with willful fire raising awareness.

Medical Oxygen

5.20 Oxygen therapy means using an oxygen cylinder or a machine to breathe in air that contains more oxygen than normal. If used sensibly, oxygen can be

safe. However, used incorrectly it will cause severe burns which, which can prove fatal.

5.21   This poses a risk in customer's home as well as to others when used in flatted developments.

5.22   Customers are advised at sign up stage and through customer meetings in Later Living Developments to inform Loreburn if they are using medical oxygen and a PCFRA can then be put in place to reduce the risks.

5.23   See Fire Safety Procedures for more information on medical oxygen.

6.   Means of Escape from Fire

Fire Evacuation

6.1   Fire evacuation procedures will be dependent on the construction and layout of the premises as well as the needs of the users within the premises. These are primarily either delayed evacuation (stay put) or simultaneous evacuation (full evacuation) and will be based on recommendations in the Fire Risk Assessment for the premises (see Fire Safety Procedures for more detail on fire evacuation procedures).

6.2   Disabilities may affect a person's ability to evacuate promptly and safely in an emergency. In the event of a fire alarm signal, installations and equipment which facilitate access at other times (e.g. lifts) may be unavailable and should not be used in the event of a fire.

6.3   Planning is therefore necessary to ensure the safety during emergencies of any person who may require assistance to escape promptly – or who, whilst evacuating slowly, might be at risk from the flow of other evacuating persons.

6.4   Planning may also be necessary to ensure the safety of other persons such as those rendering assistance, and/or to ensure that the flow of evacuating persons is not impeded.

6.5   A Person Centred Fire Risk Assessment (PCFRA) will be used to assist in planning. PCFRAs focus on individuals rather than buildings and consider the person at risk, potential ignition sources, potential for development of fire and the existing fire precautions.

6.6   See also **Sections 5 & 6** of **Fire Safety Procedures** for more information.

Fire Wardens

6.7   In the event of a fire, fire wardens are responsible for ensuring their areas are evacuated. Fire wardens must report that their area is clear at the Fire Assembly Point for the building/site.

6.8   Fire wardens must react immediately, ensuring that people leave the building or site. A systematic sweep of the building or site must be carried out on their way out of the building and should include:

- A check of all accessible areas to occupants, including toilets
- Closure of all windows and doors to prevent the spread of a fire

6.9 To ensure Fire Wardens are competent in carrying out their duties, they must attend relevant training. This will be undertaken bi-annually with elearning refresher training alternate years.

7. Fire Safety Equipment

7.1 Fire safety equipment including fire alarms; emergency lighting; fire extinguishers; smoke vents; sprinkler systems and others will be serviced and maintenance in accordance with the relevant British Standards so that any aspect of Loreburn premises and any equipment provided in connection with assuring fire safety is maintained by a competent person; in a fit and efficient state; in efficient working order and in good repair.

8. Fire Safety Signage

8.1 In all premises, standard fire safety signs will be displayed in the common escape routes, including fire action notices and no smoking notices. Where escape is possible in more than one direction, fire exit signs are provided to indicate the alternative escape routes. Fire Risk Assessments will provide recommendations on fire safety sign requirements and highlight any issues with current signage.

8.2 Site specific checks will be made as part of regular ongoing Estate Management Inspections to ensure signage and escape routes are maintained and free from obstruction.

9. Staff Training & Development

9.1 The successful implementation of the policy and supporting procedures is dependent on the knowledge and skills of staff implementing it.

9.2 Training will be provided to relevant staff to ensure a consistent approach and ensure they are carry out the roles and duties linked to the application of this policy. See **Sections 10 and 11 of Fire Safety Procedural Guide** for more detail on training.

10. Monitoring Fire Safety

10.1 The Fire Safety Strategy Group will scrutinise the process and outcomes relating to fire safety throughout all of the properties owned and managed by Loreburn Housing Association.

10.2 The group will comprise of a group leader along with representatives from the following departments:

- Asset Management
- Development
- Housing Services
- Supported Housing (Young People)
- Supported Housing (Older People)

10.3 The remit of the group is as follows:

- Regularly review the Fire Safety Policy to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

- Identify areas that need to reviewed, or where there are gaps of information.

- Develop procedures for advising customers and others of Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures.

- Provide Health & Safety Executive Group with regular updates.

10.4   Fire Safety Reports will be submitted every quarter to the Health & Safety Executive Group to provide an update on the progress of Fire Risk Assessments and the actions raised through fire risk assessments.

10.5   All fire safety related adverse events are reported in accordance with the Adverse Event Policy & Procedures. Information from these will also be reported to H&S Executive Group in the Adverse Events – Trends & Analysis report.

10.6   KPIs will be included in all contracts for Fire Risk Assessments and works arising from FRAs in accordance with the Contract Management & Performance Monitoring Policy to monitor the performance of the supplier/contractor and to allow improvements to be made where necessary.

11.   Complaints

11.1   Loreburn has a commitment to valuing complaints and ensures the organisation benefits from feedback to identify areas for change or improvement.

11.2   Loreburn has a Complaints Policy which ensures there are robust and effective procedures in place for complaints to be properly managed and acted upon.

11.3   Anyone dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint having exhausted Loreburn's complaints procedure has the right to refer the matter to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

12.   Equality & Human Rights

12.1   Loreburn aims to ensure that equality, fairness, dignity and respect are central to the way we work and how we treat our customers. We support diversity and uphold equal opportunities in all areas of our work as an employer and service provider.

12.2   Loreburn will not discriminate against tenants, staff, visitors, suppliers or others based on their age, sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion or belief, marital status, pregnancy and maternity or gender reassignment (collectively referred to as 'protected characteristics' in the Equality Act 2010).

13.   Risk Management

13.1   Loreburn has a Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Procedure. These documents set out how the organisation will manage risk as an integral part of its governance and management systems, ensuring risks are identified, evaluated and controlled effectively.

13.2   Identifiable risks arising from this policy will be monitored and managed by the internal processes set out herein and by regular review of this and all other associated policies and procedures, ensuring risks are mitigated and Loreburn complies with all legislative requirements and regulatory and best practice guidance.

14.   Responsibilities Chart

14.1   The chart below illustrates the responsibilities of all staff pertaining to this policy:

Responsibilities	CEO/ MC	Head of Asset	Asset Team Manager	Fire Safety Strategy Group	All Staff
To set the policy and direction with regards to fire safety	✔				
To instruct and manage Fire Safety Risk Assessments		✔	✔		
Instruct, undertake and manage actions from the FRA's			✔		
Instruct and manage the servicing of relevant equipment		✔	✔		
Ensure Loreburn staff have a robust understanding of Fire Safety and the associated risks	✔				
Report progress and updates quarterly to H&S Executive Group		✔	✔		
Ensure effective and clear communication with key stakeholders including customers			✔		
Reporting concerns relating to fire safety to Line Manager					✔
Participate in meetings and provide evidence for investigations as required			✔		
Ensure complaints feedback is used to improve service		✔			
Ensure staff have appropriate training		✔			
Ensure policy is reviewed every three years or as necessary		✔		✔	
Monitor fire safety strategy for organization				✔	

15. Legislative Background

15.1 There are several important pieces of legislation which impact on fire safety within dwellings and non-domestic properties.

- Fire Safety (Scotland) Act 2005
- The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Building Standards Technical Handbook 2019: Domestic
- Practical fire safety for existing specialised housing and similar premises: guidance
- Fire safety guidance for existing premises with sleeping accommodation;
- Practical fire safety guidance for existing non-residential premises

16. Associated Policies

- Adverse Events
- Aids and Adaptations
- Alterations & Improvements
- Contractors Working Arrangements
- Cyclical Maintenance
- Design Guide
- Electrical Safety
- Emergency Procedures
- Estate Management
- Gas Safety
- Hazardous Substances
- Health & Safety Policy Statement
- Personal Protection Equipment
- Planned Maintenance Major Repairs
- Reactive & Void Repairs
- Risk Assessment
- Risk Flag
- Risk Management
- Safety of Clients & Customers
- SHR Notifiable Events
- Tenancy Changes
- Third Parties
- Waste Management
- Work Equipment & Workplaces
- Working at Height

17.   Policy Review

17.1   The Policy Champion is the Health, Safety & Environment Coordinator.

17.2   The Policy Champion is responsible for completing the Health and Safety Assessment and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Assessment Checklist.

17.3   This policy will be reviewed by the Policy Champion every 3 years or sooner as required due to legislative or substantive change.

Policy Assessment Checklist

Health & Safety Assessment

Does this policy have the potential to affect:

Lone Working	Yes
Safety and/or wellbeing of customers	Yes
Safety and/or wellbeing of customers	Yes
Have the above items been considered in the preparation of this policy?	Yes

Comments:

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Assessment

Does this policy have the potential to affect:

Staff's rights to equal opportunities	Yes
Tenants' / Customer's rights to equal opportunities	Yes
Tenants' / Customer's ability to access to homes and/or services	Yes
Have the above items been considered in the preparation of this policy?	Yes

Comments:

Agile Working Assessment

Agile working requirements have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this policy: Yes