

ELECTRICAL SAFETY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- a. The purpose of this policy is to set out specific guidance to ensure the safety of fixed electrical installations and portable appliances (where applicable) in properties we own and manage.
- b. This policy aims to ensure that we meet our obligations as a landlord, and seeks to provide assurance that electrical safety is adequately managed, ensuring the safety of our tenants, leaseholders and the general public.
- c. The main objectives of this policy are to:
 - set out a clear approach for the maintenance and upgrading of electrical installations;
 - ensure a prompt, efficient and cost effective electrical installation, repair, servicing and inspection service;
 - ensure our legal compliance;
 - promote good practice;
 - ensure remedial works are carried out within appropriate timescales so that homes remain safe and electrical installations are maintained to a high standard;
 - detail a comprehensive electrical inspection and monitoring system; ensure adequate records and quality monitoring systems are implemented.

2. SCOPE

- a. This policy relates to all properties owned and managed by BCHG. An exception can be made for agency managed properties where the lease states that electrical testing is the responsibility of the lessee.
- b. Installations in dwellings owned and managed are to be installed, maintained and serviced to required standards and inspected at appropriate intervals to minimise the risk of electrocution, fire, damage to property, injury and or death.
- c. An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical wiring and equipment that is supplied from the point of the electricity meter and beyond. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the fabric of the building (walls, floors and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs).

- d. This policy covers repair, upgrading, testing and inspection of all electrical installations. All electrical repairs, upgrades and renewals will be categorized to ensure that the correct levels of priority are given. We will take specific account of any vulnerability or health and safety requirements during the prioritisation process for these works. The Policy also covers any portable equipment owned by the organisation.
- e. Electrical systems will be repaired, renewed, upgraded and tested in accordance with industry guidance and manufacturers' recommendations.
- f. Typical installations and systems covered include; domestic electrical installation; communal landlord installations; emergency lighting systems; fixed fire alarm installations; door entry systems; electric heating systems (including convectional and sustainable heating systems i.e. air source heat pumps); portable equipment owned by the organization.

3. DEFINITIONS

- a. Only appropriately skilled and competent persons will carry out electrical inspection and testing. A person shall be deemed skilled to carry out the appropriate inspection and testing only if they have sufficient qualification, knowledge and experience.
- b. We will ensure that all our homes and communal installations are tested in accordance with the Institute of Engineering Technology (IET) Regulation statutory timescales.
- c. We will also carry out Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) testing on all properties that are subject to particular types of improvement works where electrical circuits are affected. Specific timescales for this work are given in below.

4. RELATED POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- a. Electrical Safety Procedure
- b. Electrical Contracts
- c. Repairs Policy
- d. PAT testing Policy
- e. Statute and Guidance (including but not limited to)
 - i. Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
 - ii. Housing Act 1988
 - iii. Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - iv. Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended) The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
 - v. 2007 Building Regulations (including Part P requirements)
 - vi. Right to Repair Scheme (introduced 1994)

- vii. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Electricity at Work Regulations

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Chief Executive retains the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- b. The Director of Operations is responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the objectives of this policy to be met.
- c. The Head of Property is responsible for the associated procedures; this includes responsibility for monitoring, review, policy development and ensuring risks associated with electrical installations and safety are managed effectively.
- d. The Repairs Manager is responsible for the operational delivery of and compliance with this policy, staff awareness & training, and communication to customers.
- e. The Maintenance Surveyor will take day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, including:
 - i. ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage the risks arising from electrical works;
 - ii. ensuring sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out; monitoring the performance of staff and contractors; ensuring that members of the public, staff and contractors are not unnecessarily exposed to risk
 - iii. ensuring appropriate risk assessments are undertaken and that regular review is carried out
 - iv. ensuring appropriate inspections are made to assess the condition of electrical installations and equipment maintain property records and relevant certification maintain an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice
 - v. providing regular instruction and refresher training to maintain skills provide advice on the application of this policy on an individual case by case basis.
- f. All employees, irrespective of their position shall: take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be adversely affected by asbestos works, including members of the public, tenants, visitors and contractors; co-operate as appropriate with other staff and agencies to ensure compliance with this policy and all other legal requirements; halt works that, in their opinion, may present a serious risk

to health and safety; report any concerns that they may have in relation to the management of electrical compliance and electrical safety.

g. BCHG Responsibilities

- i. We aim to ensure that all electrical installations are installed and maintained to the relevant standards and are sufficient to meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders.
- ii. In achieving this we will
 - ensure sufficient socket outlets for the number of portable appliances likely to be used, in order to minimise the use of multi-socket adapters and extension leads;
 - Ensure provision is in place to prevent contact with live parts; residual current device (RCD) protection is provided where appropriate; satisfactory earthing/bonding arrangements are present to incoming services, e.g. gas and water etc.; sufficient circuits are installed to avoid danger and minimise inconvenience in the event of a fault; cables, fittings and equipment are correctly specified; all properties meet the BCHG Lettable Standard; sufficient maintenance and testing programme are in place.
 - Make arrangements and inform tenants and leaseholders of electrical works. We recognise that in certain cases there may be underlying issues that contribute to access problems. These can relate to a support need, language or format issue, or a specific tenancy management problem. In these circumstances, where it is reasonably practicable to identify the need we will try to overcome or resolve the cause of the problem and be sensitive to the issue before pursuing legal action.
- iii. Detailed computerised information will be kept for at least five years of all landlords' electrical safety certificates.
- iv. Appropriate and regular electrical safety awareness training will be provided to all relevant staff. We will employ only suitably qualified and competent staff to manage and oversee electrical works.
- v. Contract Management will be undertaken in accordance with the specific requirements set out in the Electrical Works Contract.

h. Tenants responsibility

- i. Under the terms of their Tenancy Agreement tenants must allow access to their property for maintenance and/ or safety checks to be

carried out. In order to undertake works it may be necessary to de-energise the electrical supply to the property.

- ii. Prior to undertaking any works, written confirmation will be provided in accordance with our general Consultation Strategy. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that: any action in relation to saving electronics files i.e. IT related software, programmes or other electronic storage is taken prior to the commencement of the work; any contingency arrangements arising from the absence of electrical supplies are highlighted and agreed in advance of works; appropriate access and relocation/removal of any obstacles will need to be undertaken (in situations where the tenant is unable to manage support will be agreed); the emptying and storage of freezers/ fridges etc.; there is temporary provision of heating and hot water as required; floor coverings such as laminate flooring are removed; loft spaces are cleared; any repairs or faults are reported in a timely manner.
 - iii. Any defective or unauthorised works needing rectification may incur a recharge. If any installation has been undertaken without our permission, and is found to be defective, the supply may be terminated.
 - iv. Where tenants carry out property alterations and improvements, which include additions / alterations to the electrics, they should seek authorisation prior to any works being undertaken. If works are approved, tenants are responsible for ensuring appropriate safety checks are carried out and all relevant certificates are supplied following the works/installation as set out in the Tenancy Agreement. Tenants are also responsible for meeting the cost of this
- i. **Contractor's Responsibility**
 - i. Contractors will comply with our Contractor Code of Conduct. When undertaking any electrical installation works, the contractor will also be required to conform in full with the requirements of this policy.
 - ii. All appointed electrical contractors shall be registered with the NICEIC, ECA, NAPIT or other accredited body and shall be registered under a recognised Domestic Installer Self-certification Scheme in compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations.
 - iii. Every effort will be made to arrange a convenient time and date with the tenant for access to complete the works. Appointments will be made and in certain situations written notice provided. In cases where access is denied on a number of pre-arranged occasions and following several written notifications, we will consider using legal action to gain access

6. ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- a. The frequency of inspection and testing will be determined taking into account: the type of installation and adequacy of earthing and bonding; suitability of the switchgear and control gear; serviceability of accessories and fittings; type of systems and their condition; extent of any wear and tear, damage or other deterioration of other parts of the installation and level of misuse (e.g. vandalism); presence of adequate identification and notices; any change in use of the premises which have led to, or might lead to, deficiencies in the installation; EICR observations and recommendations; the frequency and quality of maintenance.
- b. On completion of the test, certification will be issued. This will make recommendations which will be reviewed by a competent person and the necessary remedial works prioritised accordingly. Where appropriate, works will be batched and delivered through programmes. Where recommendations relate to observations only, these will be monitored through subsequent inspection and testing.
- c. Electrical works identified on certification will be recorded using the following categories:
 - i. Code C1: Where a real and immediate danger is observed that puts the safety of those using the installation at risk. The contractor will advise in writing, immediately, of the urgent work necessary to remedy the deficiency;
 - The contractor will be authorised within the terms of the contract to remedy the fault immediately
 - ii. Code C2: An observed deficiency not considered to be dangerous at the time of inspection but would become a real and immediate danger if a fault or other foreseeable event was to occur;
 - The resident will be informed of the potential deficiency and advised on safety precautions that can be taken in the short term
 - Works will be programmed to be completed at an agreed time with the resident. This work will be delivered on a risk based assessment but no work will take place longer than six months after the inspection.
 - iii. Code C3: Used to indicate that, whilst an observed deficiency is not considered to be a source of immediate or potential danger, improvement would contribute to an enhancement of the safety of the electrical installation
 - The work will be scheduled as part of the next rewire, planned major works or at before the reletting of the property

- d. Testing frequency
 - i. Our stock will be subject to a full electrical condition report test at the following times:
 - new build - first inspection carried out 10 years after installation, thereafter every five years;
 - rewires - first inspection carried out 10 years after installation, thereafter every five years all other
 - general needs stock to be inspected every five years; at a change of occupancy;
 - following any major upgrade works where electrical installations are affected;
 - at the time of a mutual exchange (if there is no power supply to carry this out, the work will be carried out as an urgent repair priority as soon as the power supply connection has been arranged by the new tenant).

7. PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING

- a. Although there is no specific requirement to undertake Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), equipment owned/managed will be subject to an annual inspection. Appropriate labeling of equipment and recording of all equipment will be undertaken in accordance with the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- b. PAT testing will be delivered and monitored through BCHG's PAT Testing Policy

8. MONITORING AND CONTROL

- a. In order to ensure full compliance monitoring will be undertaken regularly through the use of a Compliance Register, documenting all assets and their relevant testing timescales.
- b. The Repairs Manager will review the register regularly and a summary will be provided quarterly to the Executive Team and the Audit and Risk Committee.
- c. Appropriate information will be recorded on our core IT system and certificates stored electronically against each property file. These will be reviewed annually by BCHG's Health and Safety Advisors.

9. AUDITING AND REVIEW

- a. Quality of work is assessed in four ways:
 - i. Assessment of a percentage of works by a suitably experienced and qualified officer; assessment by a nominated consultant as and when required;

- ii. Self-assessment and quality assurance by the contractor; tenant feedback and satisfaction surveys.
- iii. Internal auditing arrangements are required by the contractors, which include the contractor's qualified supervisor reviewing all landlord electrical certification and checking all details prior to submission to us.
- iv. A sample of submitted records will be checked for accuracy by our appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- a. All involved will recognise their ethical and legal duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination on the grounds of; age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

11. INFORMATION REGARDING THIS POLICY

- a. Communications and documentation will be translated or interpreted as required and provided in accessible formats such as large print or Braille according to customers' needs. Further information can be found in our translation information document.
- b. Policy and procedures relating to electrical safety will be publicised widely and specific details included in the following documents
 - i. Tenant Handbook
 - ii. Tenant and Leaseholder Newsletter
 - iii. Website
 - iv. Extranet

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