

# **fire safety management policy**

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## 1. Policy statement

believe housing is committed to providing a safe environment for its employees, customers, visitors, and contractors. Part of this safety responsibility is in the provision and management of fire safety systems and procedures, which demonstrates believe housing's dedication to improving fire safety and mitigating the risk of fire to people and property. In line with regulatory requirements, believe housing will work closely with our residents in relation to giving fire safety advice, and will act upon any concerns raised.

## 2. Policy aims

Fire is a potential hazard to all believe housing buildings and, therefore, the aim of this policy is to provide a robust fire safety framework that will provide suitable mitigation against the threat of fire.

We recognise our legal and moral fire safety obligations and will ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that the risk of fire will be managed in accordance with the legislation and guidance below. Please note this list is not exhaustive:

- Regulatory Reform Order 2005
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Building Regulations (Approved Document B) 2019
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Housing Act 2004
- BS9999:2017 Fire safety in the design, management, and use of buildings – Code of practice
- BS5839-1:2017 – Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of systems in non-domestic premises
- BS5839-6:2019 – Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in domestic premises.
- BS9991:2015 – Fire safety in the design, management, and use of residential buildings
- BS5499- Safety signs, including fire safety signs.
- BS5266 – Guide to the design and provision of emergency lighting to reduce the risks from hazards in the event of failure of the normal lighting supply.

- BS6266:2011 – Fire protection for electronic equipment installations
- BS8214 2016 – Timber based fire door assemblies. Code of Practice
- Home Office: fire safety in purpose-built blocks.
- PAS79: 2020 Fire risk assessment. Housing.
- PAS9980: 2022 Fire risk appraisal of external wall construction and cladding of existing blocks of flats.

The key objectives of this policy are to ensure:

- The responsibility of believe housing to our customers, employees, visitors, and contractors
- Sufficient and suitable resources to manage fire safety are provided
- Suitable and sufficient governance arrangements are in place to manage all fire safety matters
- Fire risk assessments are completed as required for all buildings covered under legislative scope
- The actions raised from fire risk assessments are suitably managed, completed and evidenced
- The allocation of responsibilities and duties for fire risk assessment and fire management
- A programme of compartmentation surveying is undertaken on buildings under the legislative scope, and any remedial works highlighted are addressed
- Competent persons are responsible for managing fire safety provisions
- Suitable and sufficient fire safety training is provided where required
- Management of servicing regimes to ensure all fire protection systems, including fire doors, are maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and any relevant British Standards
- Effective fire safety management record keeping
- Identification of emergency plans, including evacuation strategies
- Engagement with customers and leaseholders to inform and promote fire safety.

### 3. Scope

This fire safety management policy applies to all believe housing employees, customers and contractors who may work in, occupy, or use the premises under the control of believe housing. This includes:

- Housing plus units
- General needs flat blocks
- Offices

- Community centres
- Commercial premises.

This document also covers work within other areas demanding fire management protocols, such as:

- New build properties
- Ancillary rooms (such as high-risk service cupboards/lift plant rooms)
- Refurbishment projects
- Contractor health and safety

We will also support any customer who may be vulnerable and ensure the risk of fire is lowered so far as reasonably practicable with assistance from internal departments and Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

#### 4. Roles and responsibilities

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires identification of a 'responsible person' to oversee the management of fire safety risks within our properties.

The Chief Executive is the responsible person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and delegates the day-to-day management of these duties throughout the organisation. These duties are detailed below:

Roles	Responsibilities
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge internal fire safety control procedures and performances.</li> </ul>
Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the assessment of fire safety risk and the implementation of control measures identified.</li> <li>• Implement robust and suitably resourced procedures for fire safety management, in line with the relevant regulations.</li> </ul>
Executive Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report fire safety performance to Board.</li> <li>• Ensure fire safety risks are managed in accordance with policy and procedures, assessed and control measures implemented.</li> </ul>
The Director of Assets and Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote awareness of this fire safety policy and the relevant procedures across the company.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report fire safety performance and updates to senior leaders on an agreed consistent basis.</li> <li>• Provide communication on fire safety throughout the company.</li> </ul>
The Director of Neighbourhoods and Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop procedures to make all customers aware of the fire related obligations in their tenancy agreement.</li> <li>• Provide resource and implement procedures to check all communal areas in residential buildings monthly and, where defects are identified, they are actioned. Where appropriate these will be communicated to the Compliance Team to ensure that any interim precautions can be implemented.</li> </ul>
The Director of Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all build properties that are commissioned by the organisation or purchased under Section 106 are compliant to the relevant fire legislation for residential properties and provide resource and budget to ensure that they are compliant before being occupied.</li> </ul>
The Assistant Director of Strategic Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote awareness of the fire safety policy and related procedure across the company.</li> <li>• Report fire safety performance and update directors regarding fire safety matters on an agreed consistent basis.</li> </ul>
The Compliance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure fire risk assessments are completed within the required timescales.</li> <li>• Ensure fire risk assessment actions are closed off in a timely and efficient manner, being addressed within timescales quoted on the fire risk assessment.</li> <li>• Liaise with responsible managers and other employees of believe housing to ensure fire risk assessment actions are brought to their attention, including requesting actions to be remedied.</li> <li>• Implement programmes to inspect, service and maintain fire protection provisions, including fire doors.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a programme to survey the compartmentation of relevant buildings and oversee the completion of remedial actions required.</li> <li>• Oversee the management of fire safety procedures and ensure compliance with legislation.</li> <li>• Oversee the management of fire safety contractors.</li> <li>• Liaise with stakeholders, including Durham and Darlington Fire Rescue Service (DDFRS) and other agencies/bodies.</li> <li>• Ensure relevant fire safety data is recorded and monitored.</li> <li>• Ensure that customer communication is clear and robust and, where necessary, issued in line with regulatory requirements</li> </ul>
The Compliance Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure fire risk assessments are completed within the set timescales.</li> <li>• Ensure fire risk assessment actions are addressed within the timescales quoted on the fire risk assessment.</li> <li>• Liaising with responsible managers and other employees of believe housing to ensure fire risk assessment actions are brought to their attention, including requesting actions to be remedied.</li> <li>• Manage appointed contractors performing fire safety related duties.</li> <li>• Deliver programmes to inspect, service and maintain fire protection provisions.</li> <li>• Deliver a programme to survey the compartmentation of relevant buildings and oversee the completion of remedial actions required.</li> <li>• Promote fire safety awareness with our customers and leaseholders.</li> <li>• Liaise with other departments within believe housing to advise on fire safety matters.</li> <li>• Promote compliance with relevant fire safety legislation.</li> <li>• Develop internal control procedures through training and revising guidance.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure any faults, defects or deficiencies relating to a buildings structure and its systems, including active and passive fire protection are rectified in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
The Health and Safety Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide competent health and safety advice as stipulated in regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Liaise with the Compliance Team to ensure this policy and associated procedures are audited effectively by the health and safety team.</li> </ul>
Risk and Assurance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure accidents involving fires are investigated with a view to highlighting opportunities for improvement.</li> </ul>
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure staff members are aware of fire safety management policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Including fire safety management procedures on-site or within contractor inductions.</li> <li>• Immediately report any fire safety issues to the Compliance Team and Health and Safety Team.</li> </ul>
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report any fire-related incidents or near misses to their line manager.</li> <li>• Whistleblowing for any fire safety issues.</li> <li>• Ensure they recognise where assembly points and the location of all fire exits within believe housing offices.</li> <li>• Cooperate with fire evacuation procedures in event of a fire alarm sounding in a believe housing office.</li> <li>• Complete believe housing's dedicated fire safety training when required.</li> </ul>
Customers /Leaseholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not put anyone at risk in relation to fire safety.</li> <li>• Report any faults/defects in and around their home.</li> <li>• Report any fire safety concerns to believe housing.</li> <li>• Tell believe housing of a change in circumstance where their ability to evacuate is not possible.</li> </ul>



## 5. Communication with our customers

believe housing will:

- share information on fire door safety, the block evacuation strategy, and general fire safety with all residents living in flat blocks with internal communal areas. This will be shared when a new occupier moves in and annually thereafter
- share findings of any fire risk assessment conducted with the residents of the building. This communication will also include any action believe housing is taking
- regularly promote fire safety awareness with our customers
- act upon any fire safety concerns reported by our customers
- keep customers updated on any fire remedial works taking place in residential buildings
- consider any suggestions made by our customers that could improve their fire safety
- liaise with our customers regularly to discuss local fire safety precautions and other compliance matters.

## 6. Monitoring and review

As part of the policy, believe housing will formally report to Executive Management Team, Audit Committee and the Board details of legislative non-compliance and planned corrective actions.

The Compliance Team will report key fire-related figures to Audit Committee on a quarterly basis and continually monitor and audit compliance procedures.

The policy will be reviewed every two years unless there is a significant fire incident, an important change in business or legislation, which would warrant a review being carried out at an earlier date.

## 7. Links to other policies and procedures

The policy detailed in this document should be read and reviewed in conjunction with:

- The Health and Safety Policy Statement
- The Fire Safety Management Procedure
- Flat Block Inspection Procedure
- Gas, and Solid Fuel Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy

- Assured (shorthold) Tenancy Agreement
- CDM Procedure