

**ARAWAK WALTON HOUSING ASSOCIATION
FIRE SAFETY POLICY ARRANGEMENTS**

Approved by	Board of Management
Date of Approval	Presented to Board - July 2024
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Policy Ownership	Operations Director
Strategic Bridges	We Value our People and our Roots We aim high We move with the times We rely on teamwork We are Open & Accountable
Legal Review	The Policy has been written in conjunction with Vita Safety our H&S Consultants.
Version	1.0
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Statement of Values	We value people; We shall listen and respond to the needs of all people involved with Arawak Walton. We aim high; We shall improve the quality of our services. We move with the times; We stay alert to changing circumstances and respond to them with imagination and innovation. We rely on teamwork; We look for partners and alliances to help us achieve our aims both inside and outside the Association. We are open and accountable; We provide user-friendly information about our performance as a housing association.

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1.0 Statement

- 1.1 Arawak Walton Housing Association will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk from fire will be managed in compliance with the appropriate fire safety legislation, guidance and best practice standards.
- 1.2 Management of fire risks will be undertaken in such a way as to prevent injury or ill-health to employees, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by the activities of the organisation.
- 1.3 In doing so, Arawak Walton Housing Association will ensure that:
 - 1.3.1 fire safety risk assessments are completed and recorded for all its premises where The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005 (RRO) is applicable.
 - 1.3.2 a competent person to assist with implementing the requirements of the legislation is appointed.
 - 1.3.3 organisational arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of fire safety are implemented.
 - 1.3.4 general fire precautions to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of its employees, occupants, contractors and visitors on its premises are implemented and maintained.

2.0 Responsibilities

- 2.1 Vita Safety Ltd have been appointed to act as the Responsible Person as defined by the legislation. The person with responsibility for delivery of our approach to fire safety for Arawak Walton Housing Association is the Operations Director, who will be supported to deliver the responsibility by the Compliance Manager.
- 2.2 Where required, the company will seek competent source of advice on fire safety to meet its legal obligations and requirements.
- 2.3 The company have several trained fire wardens/marshals which cover all aspects of the business e.g. offices, sheltered schemes and general needs schemes.
- 2.4 Fire wardens/marshals have received training in their role from external providers. They are responsible for reactive and proactive fire safety measures.
- 2.5 Recommended competence (Responsible Person)
 - 2.5.1 Understand what is needed to comply with fire safety law.
 - 2.5.2 Ensure suitable fire risk assessments are conducted and reviewed as required.
 - 2.5.3 Ensure that general fire precautions are identified and maintained.

3.0 Fire Safety Assistance

3.1 The Association has appointed Vita Safety Ltd. (H&S Consultants) to provide competent assistance on fire safety matters, in accordance with Article 18 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

3.2 Recommended competence (External)

3.2.1 Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, a person is to be regarded as competent for the job where they have received sufficient training and/or have experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them to properly assist in undertaking the preventive and protective measures.

4.0 Arrangements

4.1 Fire Safety Risk Assessment

4.1.1 Vita Safety Ltd have undertaken a fire safety risk assessment of our premises and will conduct a full assessment based on the following frequencies:

4.1.1.1 **Sheltered Schemes and Homes with Multiple Occupation (HMO's) - annually.**

4.1.1.2 **General Needs Schemes and other premises - every three years.**

4.1.2 Fire risk assessments should be reviewed at least on annual basis. The review of the assessment can be an internal assessment.

4.1.3 Completed risk assessments are retained at our head office and the Compliance Manager is responsible for ensuring that the recommendations arising from the assessment are implemented.

4.1.4 Recommended competence (Internal or External)

4.1.4.1 It is recommended that a competent individual (either an external or internal resource) should be used for completing the fire risk assessment.

4.2 Fire Prevention and Protection Measures

4.2.1 Fire hazards are identified within the fire risk assessment of our properties, and relevant recommendations are implemented to ensure they are adequately controlled. Such measures include:

4.2.1.1 Compartmentation

4.2.1.2 Fire alarms

4.2.1.3 Emergency lighting

4.2.1.4 Fire safety signs and notices

4.2.1.5 Provision of escape routes and exits

- 4.2.1.6 Fire-fighting appliances
- 4.2.1.7 Provision of employee training and information
- 4.2.1.8 Management of fire safety

4.3 Means of Warning and Detection (Fire Alarm System)

- 4.3.1 Our premises are covered by suitable means of warning and detection. Where fire alarm systems are installed, they are subject to periodic testing, inspection and maintenance in accordance with the relevant sections of BS5839 (part 1 or part 6, as required).
- 4.3.2 The alarm system is tested on a weekly basis by activating a different alarm call point each time, in rotation.
- 4.3.3 The results of alarm testing and servicing are recorded. Records of testing can be accessed at head office.
- 4.3.4 The fire alarm system is serviced routinely on a six-monthly basis. Note that alternative frequencies may be implemented according to recommendations from the fire risk assessment.
- 4.3.5 Recommended competence (External)
 - 4.3.5.1 Servicing and maintenance delivered in compliance with BS 5839-1 and/or BS 5839-6.
 - 4.3.5.2 Certified to BAFE SP203-1 Fire Detection and Fire Alarm Systems Scheme.
 - 4.3.5.3 Competency and experience of alarm sound tests and silencing controls as instructed by the manufacturer's guidance.
- 4.3.6 Recommended required competence (Internal)
 - 4.3.6.1 Internal personnel are familiar with testing procedure and arrangements for relevant fire alarm systems in our properties.

4.4 Emergency Lighting

- 4.4.1 We have installed emergency lighting systems in our properties that incorporate a battery backup that will activate on failure of the lighting circuit. The systems are subject to testing in accordance with BS 5266-1, which includes a monthly activation test and an annual full discharge test by a suitably competent person. The results of emergency lighting tests are recorded and retained at head office.
- 4.4.2 Recommended competence (External)
 - 4.4.2.1 Certified contractor - British Approvals for Fire Equipment (BAFE) SP203-4 (Emergency Lighting Systems).
 - 4.4.2.2 All servicing and maintenance work is carried out in accordance with BS5266-1 (further standards apply).

- 4.4.2.3 National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) / National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers (NAPIT) Registered Electrician.
- 4.4.2.4 Competency in the frequent testing and drain of emergency light systems.
- 4.4.2.5 Internal testing: Fire Protection Association (FPA) Certificate in Fire Detection, Alarms & Emergency Lighting Systems.
- 4.4.2.6 Qualified electrician with specific training in line with The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Electrician's Guide to Emergency Lighting (8th Edition).
- 4.4.2.7 City & Guilds Emergency Lighting Course.

4.4.3 Recommended competence (Internal)

- 4.4.3.1 Internal personnel are familiar with testing procedures and arrangements for relevant emergency lighting systems in our properties.

4.5 Fire Safety Signs

- 4.5.1 Directional fire escape signs are displayed throughout our company premises to indicate the location of emergency exits. Such signs are illuminated where required.

4.5.2 Signs are also displayed:

- 4.5.2.1 to identify the location of the assembly point;
- 4.5.2.2 to describe the type and function of fire extinguishers.
- 4.5.2.3 to describe the correct operation of exit door hardware [i.e. 'push bar to open' or 'turn to exit'].
- 4.5.2.4 to show the correct operation of gas shut off valves.
- 4.5.2.6 to show 'fire action' required.
- 4.5.2.7 to identify fire doors which must be kept shut or kept clear.
- 4.5.2.8 to provide the names of fire marshals - not specifically required but helps to fulfil legal requirements to communicate this information.
- 4.5.2.9 to designate the building as non-smoking in accordance with smoke free law.
- 4.5.2.10 to indicate on each lift landing 'in the event of fire, do not use the lift'
- 4.5.2.11 to identify fire hazard rooms and their contents for the benefit of fire-fighters -

- 4.5.3 All signs comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. As part of our routine weekly checks (insert job title(s)) will check that safety signs are in place and clearly visible.

4.6 Escape Routes and Exits

- 4.6.1 Where applicable, structural fire separation is provided by protected routes surrounded by fire resistant walls, ceilings, and fire doors providing thirty minutes, one hour or two hours fire protection, as required. Where building alterations take place which could result in damage to the fire protection, we ensure that the project includes measures to provide temporary protection during the work and to reinstate fire protection to the required level.
- 4.6.2 Fire doors are kept closed by self-closing devices and/or kept locked shut where designed to be. Where they are designed to be held open in some of properties, fire doors are kept clear so that they can close correctly.
- 4.6.3 On a monthly basis scheme staff or housing officers will check that all escape routes are clear and that exit doors are functioning correctly. Checks are documented and records are retained at head office.
- 4.6.4 The condition of each fire door (including the presence and condition of door closers, intumescent and smoke seals) is checked on a periodic basis. The results of escape route and fire door checks are recorded and retained at head office.
- 4.6.5 Recommended required competence (External)
 - 4.6.5.1 A competent person should conduct an inspection of flat front doors at least once each year.

4.7 Fire Extinguishers

- 4.7.1 We have selected suitable numbers and types of fire extinguishers, and these are located as instructed by our Advisers.
- 4.7.2 In accordance with the findings of the fire safety risk assessment. Our fire marshals have been trained in the practical use of extinguishers and the circumstances when they can be safely used and when they should not be used.
- 4.7.3 Fire extinguishers are subject to an annual servicing contract by a competent person.
- 4.7.4 On a monthly basis, scheme staff or housing officers will check that fire extinguishers are correctly located and appear to be in good condition. The results of these checks are recorded and are retained at our head office.
- 4.7.5 Recommended competence (External)
- 4.7.6 For portable fire extinguishers:
 - Fire Industry Association (FIA) - Servicing & Maintenance of portable fire extinguishers (4-day course)
 - BAFE BS5306 Part 3 Certified

5.0 Training for Staff

- 5.1 New starters are provided with information on emergency procedures on their first day of employment, including the location of escape routes, the sound of the alarm and the location of the assembly point.
- 5.2 All staff receive annual refresher training in fire safety and fire procedures. Those with fire safety roles are provided with instruction in their responsibilities.
- 5.3 Records of all employee training are retained at head office

6.0 Cooperation and Coordination

- 6.1 Contractors working on the premises are briefed in essential fire safety matters including location of escape routes, the sound of the alarm and the location of the assembly point. We ensure that contractors working on any gas installations and electrical systems are suitably qualified. Where contractors need to conduct hot work, we ensure that fire risks are adequately managed and controlled as required. Further details of our arrangements for the control of contractors are included within a separate section of this policy.

7.0 Managing Change

- 7.1 Where there are temporary changes to staffing levels or layout of our premises, we will review our fire risk assessment to ensure our fire safety arrangements remain adequate.
- 7.2 Example changes include:
 - Having enough trained staff in work to co-ordinate an evacuation.
 - Having the capacity to assist people with a disability or others who may require assistance.
 - Providing more staff with training to ensure adequate cover.
 - Revising evacuation plans with a changed layout or complement of staffing.
 - Conducting systems testing during closure of our premises.

8. Links to Other Key Documents

- Asset Management Strategy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Repairs Policy

9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 9.1 The Association will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people in line with our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.
- 9.2 The organisation will operate within equality legislation and regulation and recognises the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 which are: Race, Gender, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Age and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly.