



Electrical Safety Policy

Linthouse Housing Association	
Policy Implementation Checklist:	
Policy Guardian:	Director of Property Services
Policy Author:	Technical Services Manager
Policy Title:	Electrical Safety
Approved by Chief Executive on:	
Approved by LHA Management Committee on:	25 th October 2022
Effective from:	26 th October 2022
Due for Review on:	October 2025
Policy Linkages:	
Training Completed on:	
Posted on Website on:	
Staff Sign off as Read and Training Completed:	

Table of Contents

- Section 1: Introduction2
 - 1.1 Electrical Safety2
 - 1.2 Scope2
 - 1.3 Our Mission.....2
 - 1.4 Our Vision and Values3
 - 1.5 Our Organisational Culture3
- Section 2: The Legal Framework4
 - 2.1 General.....4
- Section 3: Overarching Objectives and Implementation4
 - 3.1 Overarching Objectives.....4
 - 3.2 Implementation5
 - 3.2.1 Responsibilities for Policy implementation.....5
 - 3.2.2 Responsibilities as an Employer.....5
 - 3.2.3 Responsibilities as a Landlord.....8
 - 3.2.4 Responsibilities as a Tenant.....9
 - 3.2.5 Financial Control.....9
- Section 4: Compliance and Complaints 10
 - 4.1 General Complaint Handling Procedure 10
 - 4.2 Performance Monitoring 10
- Section 5: Review of Electrical Safety Policy10
- Appendix 1 11

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Electrical Safety

- 1.1.1 Linthouse Housing Association ('LHA') accepts its legal duties set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Electricity at work Regulations 1989, BS 7671 (IEE wiring Regulations 18th Edition) and subsequent legislation, and also its moral and ethical obligations to tenants, employees and all other persons who may be affected by operational practices and procedures. The main objective of this Policy is to ensure the promotion of electrical safety.
- 1.1.2 This Policy outlines our approach to the management of our electrical safety. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that Linthouse Housing Association provides employees, and volunteers with a safe working environment, and ensuring our tenants and factored owners live in a safe environment whilst complying with all necessary legislation.
- 1.1.3 The Association will observe all relevant Health and Safety and legislative requirements and current recommendations on best practice. To provide the best service that we can, the Association ensures that tenant safety is always at the forefront of our repairs services.
- 1.1.4 **Note:** In this Policy, Linthouse Housing Association is referred to as “we”, “us” or “our”.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This Policy applies to all current and prospective tenants, factored owners, staff and committee members of LHA.

1.3 Our Mission

- 1.3.1 The Electrical Safety Policy forms part of our mission to:
“deliver high quality and cost-effective housing services designed to meet the needs of existing and future customers. To work in partnership with others to create thriving communities that people want to live and work in.”

1.4 Our Vision and Values

1.4.1 Our vision is the creation and sustainment of lasting, unique, vibrant homes in stable, popular and ambitious urban communities. Our vision is underpinned by four core values which we apply to all areas of our business. These are to be:

- i. **Customer Driven**
- ii. **Honest**
- iii. **Accountable**
- iv. **Transparent**

1.5 Our Organisational Culture

1.5.1 Our **C.H.A.T** values as outlined, form the foundation of our **Listen, Hear, Act (L.H.A)** customer excellence and organisational culture programme. All staff receive training at induction on customer service standards and the organisational culture we promote. This includes reference to our Equality and Diversity Policy and a requirement to treat colleagues, tenants, contractors, service users, and any other stakeholders with dignity and respect.

1.5.2 The organisational culture we promote is based on finding solutions to suit customer needs regardless of individual differences We will:

1. **Listen** - We are committed to listening to those we do business with, be that our customers, staff, stakeholders, regulators or funders, to ensure that our responses are reflective of what people are saying to us.
2. **Hear** - Once we listen and understand the need/demand/offer that is presented, we will ensure that we fully understand what is being said.
3. **Act** - Whilst we will think about what we do, we want to be known for acting swiftly to deliver solutions and for always keeping our promises.

1.5.3 Our Customer Service Charter aim is to ensure all of our service users receive an excellent standard of service. The Charter helps define what our customers can expect when contacting or engaging with the staff in our office. It is available on our website, direct from the office, or in other formats as required.

Section 2: The Legal Framework

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 Due to the nature of this Policy, references are made throughout the document with regards to the relevant, legal obligations.
- 2.1.2 The Association is committed to meeting all legal requirements, such as the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and those preceding, the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004, the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011, as well as all relevant Health and Safety legislation and all other pertinent legislation, including but not limited to, the Right to Repair and Right to Compensation schemes.

Section 3: Overarching Objectives and Implementation

This section outlines our overarching objectives and how we will implement these.

3.1 Overarching Objectives

- 3.1.1 Our primary aim is to ensure that management and employees comply with the procedures within the adopted Electrical Safety Policy.
- To ensure that all persons are protected from harm which could be caused by misuse of, or by, faulty electrical equipment belonging to the organisation.
 - To ensure formal safe working procedures are followed when performing maintenance on electrical equipment.
 - To ensure all properties owned and managed by LHA have installations and equipment that is safe for continuous use.
 - To treat all tenants and owners fairly and equitably.
 - To optimise the useful life of the properties and components, including implementing and co-ordinating an effective major component replacement programme when due.
 - To provide sufficient, appropriately trained staff and adequate administrative resources to implement this policy efficiently and effectively.
 - To ensure that the required service is provided within the available budget.
 - To ensure value-for-money is always achieved and both in relation to professional services and works procured in line with the Procurement Policy.
 - To ensure that there is proper control of policy.
 - To respond positively to changing needs and standards.
 - To always adopt legally correct processes and good practice.

3.2 Implementation

3.2.1 Responsibilities for Policy and Implementation

The Management Committee has overall responsibility for approving the Policy

Responsibility for the implementation of this Policy and associated procedures is delegated to the Technical Services Manager ('**TSM**') and the Asset Manager ('**AM**').

The Association, as an employer, also has a responsibility to ensure appropriate staffing levels and the provision of training and resources to enable the effective implementation of this Policy.

3.2.2 Responsibilities as an employer

The association must maintain electrical equipment if it can cause danger, but the law does not say how we must do this or how often. The association will decide the level of maintenance needed according to the risk of an item becoming faulty, and how the equipment is constructed. We should consider:

- The increased risk if the equipment isn't used correctly, isn't suitable for the job or is used in a harsh environment.
- If the item is not double insulated, for example some kettles are earthed but some pieces of hand-held equipment, such as hairdryers, are usually insulated.

This includes any electrical equipment employees use at work, whether it is their own or supplied by the association. We have a joint responsibility to maintain any equipment used by employees that is either leased (e.g., a photocopier) or provided by a contractor (but not equipment both provided and used by a contractor).

The association will periodically check if any work needs doing. How we do this depends on the type of equipment.

Not every electrical item needs a portable appliance test (PAT).

In some cases, a regular user check and visual inspection is enough, e.g., checking for loose cables or signs of fire damage and, if possible, checking inside the plug for internal damage, bare wires, and the correct fuse.

Other equipment, e.g., a floor cleaner or kettle, may need a portable appliance test, but not necessarily every year.

How do we ensure the safety of electrical equipment?

- Encourage employees to look at the supply cable to the electrical equipment before they use it (user check)
- Encourage employees to look at electrical equipment before they use it (user check)
- Make sure all portable equipment is visually inspected at initial intervals which could be between six months and four years, depending on the type of equipment. See the last bullet point on this list and Table 1 at the end of this leaflet for more information.
- Arrange for equipment that is not double insulated to have a portable appliance test (including leads) at initial intervals which could be between one and five years depending on the type of equipment.
- Ensure that damaged or faulty equipment is recognised, removed from use without delay and either:

repaired by someone competent (i.e., with suitable training, skills, and knowledge for the task to prevent injury to themselves or others) or disposed of to prevent its further use – consult your local authority about arrangements for disposing of electrical equipment.
- Review the maintenance system to determine whether to decrease or increase your inspection and/or testing intervals. It may be useful to keep records of all inspections and tests, label equipment with the result and date of the test, but there is no legal requirement to do either of these things.

Appendix 1 within this policy gives an indication of where a visual inspection should be sufficient and where testing may be needed to comply with the law. It also suggests initial intervals for the different types of checks.

User checks, Visual inspection, and portable appliance checks

User checks

These should be carried out before most electrical equipment is used, with the equipment disconnected. Employees should look for:

- Damage to the lead including fraying, cuts, or heavy scuffing, e.g., from floor box covers
- Damage to the plug, e.g. to the cover or bent pins, or plugs being hot to the touch
- Tape applied to the lead to join leads together

- Coloured wires visible where the lead joins the plug (the cable is not being gripped where it enters the plug)
- Damage to the outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws
- Signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug, lead, or piece of equipment
- Equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions, such as wet or dusty environments or where water spills are possible
- Cables trapped under furniture or in floor boxes

Visual Inspections

To carry out a visual inspection you don't need to be an electrician, but you do need to know what to look for and you must also have sufficient knowledge to avoid danger to yourself and others.

As part of the visual inspection, you should consider whether:

- The electrical equipment is being used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- The equipment is suitable for the job
- There has been any change of circumstances
- The user has reported any issues

Portable and moveable equipment

A portable or movable electric appliance is any item that can be moved, either connected or disconnected from an electrical supply. Portable or moveable items generally have a lead (cable) and a plug.

Portable and moveable equipment includes the following:

- Electrical equipment that can be easily moved around, such as kettles, vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, portable heaters, fans, desk lamps, some TVs, radios, some small electric cookers, PC projectors, small appliances such as irons, hair dryers and kitchen equipment including food mixers, toasters etc.
- Larger items that could be moved (but only rarely) , e.g. water chillers, fridges, microwaves, photocopiers, vending machines, washing machines, electric cookers, fax machines, desktop computers, electric beds etc. are considered to be moveable items.

- Handheld items, such as hairdryers, which do not have a plug but have been wired in (or fixed) are still considered to be portable appliances, but large electrical items, such as water boilers that are wired in, are not portable appliances as they are not designed to be moved and would come under the scope of fixed maintenance installation maintenance.
- Mobile phone and other battery-charging equipment that is plugged into the mains (but the phones themselves and any other battery operated equipment would not be included)
- Extension leads, multi-way adapters and connection leads.

Earthed equipment and double insulated equipment

When deciding whether to test electrical equipment, you need to consider the type of construction of the equipment in use. There are two basic types of electrical equipment construction – Class 1 (earthed) and Class II (double insulated)

Earthed equipment

For safety reasons, Class 1 equipment has an earth connection. If there is a fault within the equipment there is a possibility that the outside of the equipment could cause an electrical shock if the earth connection is not there. As a result, it is recommended that Class 1 equipment has a portable appliance test to ensure the earth connection is sound.

Double insulated equipment

Class II equipment is sometimes referred to as “double insulated” equipment. This means that there is extra insulation within the construction of the equipment to prevent accidental contact with live parts, even if there is a fault.

Class II equipment does not need an earth connection to maintain safety. It will not need a portable appliance test, although you should ensure that user checks and visual inspections are carried out as the integrity of the equipment casing is a key safety feature.

3.2.3 Landlord Responsibilities

In carrying out its obligations as an owner, landlord and factor, the Association will:

Meet all legal requirements, as defined in the relevant Acts, such as, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, and those preceding, the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004, the Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011, as well as Health and Safety or any other relevant legislation. The Association will work to meet all Scottish Housing Quality Standards and Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing requirements. Performance will be reported transparently in the Annual Return on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Maintain and repair its housing stock to the standards specified and approved by the Association, in respect of those areas listed as the landlord's responsibility in the Tenancy Agreement and Factoring Agreement in relation to the factored owners.

Linthouse Housing Association will ensure all properties owned by have a valid electrical installation condition report

Maintain adequate insurance of its housing and other buildings and open space for which it has legal responsibility as owner, landlord and factor.

3.2.4 Tenant Responsibilities

The Association will ensure that all tenants are made aware of their responsibility to report all repairs promptly to the Association, as described in the Tenancy Agreement. Tenants will also be made aware of the need to provide access to allow testing of electrical installations on a periodic basis.

3.2.5 Financial Control

An annual maintenance budget, as part of the overall budget, will be approved by the Management Committee. In preparing the budget, the Property Services Team will take full account of the number of properties due for testing in the coming year and ensure adequate amounts are included to allow the programming of the testing works.

Ongoing monitoring of expenditure on testing will be carried out.

Quarterly devolved budget meetings will be held with the Finance Agents and relevant Business Support Team members to review and monitor spend following completion of quarterly accounts.

Authority to instruct works and authorise invoices will be in line with the Financial Regulations Policy.

Section 4: Compliance and Complaints

4.1 General Complaint Handling Procedure

4.1.1 Our complaint handling procedure was established by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

4.1.2 In accordance with housing law, we provide our tenants with thorough information pertaining to our complaint handling process. Moreover, we also advise all service users on their right to complain.

4.1.3 A complaint is defined as:

“An expression of dissatisfaction by one or more members of the public about the housing association’s action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the housing association.”

4.1.4 Our complaints handling process includes explicit reference to customer complaints relating to equalities issues. In addition, we have a regulatory requirement to provide information to the Scottish Housing Regulator on the number of customer complaints we receive that relate to equalities issues in the Annual Return on the Charter.

4.2 Performance Monitoring

4.2.1 The Property Services Team will report quarterly to the Management Committee on all matters included within this Policy and will also report on progress in relation to the annual Operational Plan affecting the section. All ARC indicators affecting Property Services as reported to The Scottish Housing Regulator will also be referred for discussion to the Management Committee at the appropriate times throughout the year.

Section 5: Review of Electrical Safety Policy

5.1 Unless changes are made to the regulations listed within this policy it will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure that the appropriate amendments are made. All staff and relevant third parties will be informed. Continuously subjecting our Policy to review will ensure that its effectiveness is maintained, and that feedback can be acted upon in a reasonable time frame.

Appendix 1

Equipment/environment	User checks	Formal visual Inspection	Combined inspection and testing
Battery-operated: (less than 40 volts)	No	No	No
Extra low voltage: (less than 50 volts AC): Telephone equipment, low voltage desk lights	No	No	No
Desktop computers, VDU screens	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No, if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Photocopiers, fax machines: Not hand-held. Rarely moved.	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No, if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Double insulated <input type="checkbox"/> (Class II) equipment: Not hand -held. Moved occasionally, e.g. fans, table lamps	No	Yes, 2-4 years	No
Double insulated <input type="checkbox"/> (Class II) equipment: Hand-held , e.g. some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	No
Earthed equipment (Class II): Electric kettles, some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment and irons.	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1-2 years
Cables (leads and plugs connected to the above) and mains voltage extension leads and battery- charging equipment	Yes	Yes, 6 months-4 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, 1-5 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to