

Policy

TITLE	Fire Safety Policy		
Policy ref:	YH006P	Approval date	February 2025
Owner	Corporate Services Director	Planned review date	February 2028
Approved by	Executive Committee		

Version	Purpose/change	Author	Date
1.0	Policy altered to incorporate the newly proposed Fire Safety Bill (2020) and to include the role of Fire Safety Advisor within the Health and Safety Team.	David Coggrave (Interim Health and Safety Manager)	August 2020
2.0	Reference to the Fire Safety Bill altered to (2021) to reflect when this was passed as law. "Fire Safety Advisor" title replaced by "Fire Risk Manager". "Competent Person" changed to "Responsible Person" to align with the terminology in the Bill.	Mary Boothman	May 2021
3.0	Updated job titles throughout the organisation. Added The Abbeyfield Society Fire Safety Statement as an appendix to the Policy.	Mary Boothman	February 2022
4.0	Removal of reference to the "Building Safety Manager", due to a change in Government guidance. Updated information relating to Fire Risk Assessments, given the decision to bring these in-house. Removing reference to "regions" or regional roles, following the organisational restructure. Removal of Quality Team responsibilities. Addition of the Head of Property Services into responsibilities section.	Mary Boothman and Jonathan Vitta	November 2022
5.0	Updated fire safety legislation, job titles and roles, removal of partnership authority and updates to Fire Risk Assessment process.	Andrew O'Brien (Fire Safety Advisor)	November 2024
5.1	Minor change to remove reference to Fire Log Book and replace with reference to Safety Culture system.	Mary Boothman (Lead Health & Safety Advisor)	September 2025

1 Background	Fire safety legislation specifically requires the Abbeyfield Living Society to: • Provide and maintain such fire precautions as are necessary to safeguard those who use the premises. • Carry out a fire risk assessment considering all employees and other people who may be affected by a fire. • Ensure our fire risk assessments include the structure, external walls (including anything attached to them such as balconies) and flat front doors. • Make adequate provision for any disabled people with special needs who use or may be present at the premises.
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	- Document the significant findings of the risk assessment and the details of anyone who might be especially at risk in case of fire e.g. care residents or people with restricted mobility. - Provide information, instruction, and training to employees about the fire precautions in your workplace. - Provide information, instruction to housing residents on fire doors and evacuation strategies. The consequences of a fire in Abbeyfield Living Society properties can be more serious than in many other premises, and as a result, Abbeyfield fire risk assessments, fire precautions, and fire safety procedures will take into account the risks to all relevant persons.
2 Objectives	The aim of this policy is to ensure that fire prevention and fire safety are effectively managed within Abbeyfield Living Society properties. It establishes a fire risk management framework based upon risk assessment and the implementation of control measures to prevent and protect residents, employees, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and property from the risk of smoke, fire and damage to building structures. Our fire safety planning and procedures will take into account the specific risks associated with vulnerable older residents together with the nature and purpose of our service activities.
3 Scope	All staff, including agency workers and temporary staff, residents, visitors, volunteers, and contractors who may be present in our premises.
4 Policy	Roles and Responsibilities 4.1 It is the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) responsibility to ensure: - Fire safety and fire precautions are corporately managed across the Abbeyfield Living Society through the Executive Committee and to ensure the organisation aims for the highest standards of fire safety. - Resources are allocated to enable compliance with statutory provisions and ensure any necessary improvements are made and that appropriate training is undertaken. - Fire safety is overseen by a nominated "Responsible Person" to ensure continued compliance. The CEO will receive advice and support from the Head of Health, Safety & Environment, who will act as the "Responsible Person" for fire safety on

behalf of the Abbeyfield Living Society and who will keep the CEO informed on all significant fire issues.

4.2 It is the **Operational Directors'** responsibility to ensure that:

- All premises within their directorate have a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment completed, recorded, and updated as necessary, and that appropriate fire precautions are resourced and maintained.
- Suitable reporting tools are in place to report on compliance to the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees.
- Appropriate frameworks and communication pathways are in place to manage adverse events and prevent enforcement.
- All actions arising from fire risk assessments are considered, resourced and implemented in a timely manner and that suitable records of actions undertaken are kept.
- People with responsibilities for managing and implementing fire safety measures receive appropriate fire information, instruction, and training.
- Statutory prohibition, enforcement, alterations, or similar notices are responded to in a timely manner and that appropriate remedial action plans are adequately resourced and implemented. All correspondence must be forwarded to the Head of Health, Safety and Environment.

4.3 It is the **Head of Health, Safety and Environment's** responsibility to:

- Check and ensure that fire risk assessments have been completed and recorded for all Abbeyfield Living Society premises.
- Input on tender specifications for contractors relating to fire safety and work with the Head of Property Services to ensure appropriate due diligence and quality assurance.
- Ensure fire risk assessments are reviewed at least every 12 months in Care and every 24 months in all other locations, unless a significant change has occurred resulting in the necessity to review the fire risk assessment.
- Ensure that key performance indicators for fire risk assessment compliance are agreed with the Head of Property Services and reported to the Corporate Health, Safety & Quality Group on a quarterly basis.
- Provide support and guidance on fire safety to all staff and volunteers at the Abbeyfield Living Society, particularly those implementing fire safety measures.
- Act as subject matter expert on fire training content and ensure suitable fire training is provided to enable staff to obtain the knowledge and competencies required to carry out fire safety tasks.
- Update centrally held documents / support materials to ensure they comply with the relevant legislation and ensure they are available to access as and when necessary.

	• Ensure impact analysis on new national guidance is undertaken to ensure the senior management team can focus on key priorities within the organisation. • Develop audit tools to track fire safety arrangements. • Monitor the correct implementation and compliance of fire safety at Abbeyfield through sample audits and support visits. • Ensure where fire officers letters, notices of deficiencies and enforcement notices are handled appropriately to ensure life safety. • Work closely with the Local Fire Authorities to ensure a consistent approach across the Abbeyfield Living Society to managing fire safety. • Attend training courses relevant to their work to maintain competence levels. 4.4 The Fire Safety Advisor's responsibility to: • Ensure this policy is reviewed regularly and kept up to date (as delegated by the Head of Health, Safety and Environment). • Ensure fire safety compliance is embedded into all decision making across the Abbeyfield Living Society. • Ensure the register for fire officer letters / Notices of Deficiency (NODs) is kept up to date so actions can be tracked centrally for life safety and to prevent enforcement. • Ensure Abbeyfield is represented at key consultations on new and emerging regulation and guidance. • Ensure fire risk assessments are reviewed as and when required to ensure compliance. • Undertake ad hoc fire risk assessments when requested to do so. • Support the Property Team day-to-day with competent advice. • Undertake random site audits of contractor repairs. • Deliver fire safety training for Abbeyfield staff. • Help formulate specifications for fire contracts. 4.5 It is the People Development Team's responsibility (in collaboration with the Health and Safety Team) to ensure: • Minimum standards are set for fire training compliance. • All staff have access to the fire safety training relevant to their role. • Compliance data is provided to the Health & Safety Team for the above set standards. • An appropriate number of fire marshals & wardens are trained within each service to manage the fire strategy. • That all trainers maintain their practice and attend relevant courses to be able to support services.
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	• Where blended or e-learning training is provided, that appropriate due diligence checks are undertaken, and the course content meets requirements. 4.6 It is the Regional Operations Managers' responsibility, at all premises within their area or for which they are responsible, to: • Ensure people with responsibilities for managing and implementing fire safety measures are clearly identified, understand their responsibilities, and receive appropriate information, instruction, and training. • Liaise with the Property Team and Fire Safety Advisor to ensure risk assessments are reviewed and updated when there is reason to suspect that they are no longer valid or when there are changes to the premises or organisational arrangements. • Ensure there is a programme for preparing resident risk assessments and personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) are formulated at each premises, stored securely and that there is a process for regular review. • Ensure fire precautions and control measures including the relevant documentation at the premises are adequately maintained and provide a defensible record of control. • Report any concerns to the Head of Health, Safety and Environment and Head of Property Services, as necessary. • Ensure any statutory prohibition, enforcement, alterations or similar notices are reported to the Health & Safety Team and ensure a remedial action plan is prepared and implemented. • To attend training courses relevant to their work to maintain competence levels. 4.7 It is the Head of Property Services' responsibility to: • Collaborate with the Health & Safety Team to ensure that there is a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment for each premises and that an action plan for any remedial works is prepared and implemented in a timely manner. • Ensure key performance indicators for fire safety compliance are agreed with the Head of Health, Safety and Environment and reported to the Corporate Health, Safety & Quality Group on a quarterly basis. • Resources are appropriately allocated to ensure fire safety management is tracked to monitor compliance within the organisation. • Manage contracts and tenders effectively and ensure planned preventive maintenance arrangements are in place for all fire protection measures. • Ensure the central action tracker is updated regularly to accurately reflect all remedial actions from the fire risk assessments and enable reporting on performance by providing data towards key performance indicators.
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	• Ensure contractor due diligence, qualifications and accreditations are in place for fire works. • Ensure contractors are instructed to maintain the integrity of fire compartmentation and to report any breaches of fire compartmentation that they may identify or cause. • Ensure all contractors are made aware of requirements for hot work permits, risk assessments and method statements are checked. • Seek advice from the Fire Safety Advisor to ensure remedial works are undertaken safely at our properties. • Work closely with Regional Operations Managers and the Fire Safety Advisor in rectifying relevant concerns raised in NODs, Prohibition, Enforcement, and Advisory notices served on any Abbeyfield Living Society properties. • Attend training courses relevant to their work to maintain competence levels. 4.8 Service Managers (including Care Home Managers, Operations Managers, and Sheltered Housing Managers) are responsible for: • Ensure their staff understand their responsibilities in relation to fire safety and receive appropriate information, instruction, and training. • Ensure that the fire risk assessment for the premises can be accessed when required for inspections and audits. • Ensure that, when there is reason to suspect that the fire risk assessment is no longer valid or when there are changes to the premises or organisational arrangements, this is reported to the Fire Safety Advisor and/or Head of Health, Safety and Environment so a review can be undertaken. • Liaise with the Property Team to ensure that all service-level actions identified by the Fire Risk Assessments are completed within the required timeframes. • Ensure that scheduled tests, inspections, and maintenance checks are carried out in full and on time for all fire-related equipment and to report to the Property Team any that are delayed. This includes items undertaken in house or by approved contractors. • Ensure fire safety compliance tasks are completed and any concerns found are raised as actions using the Safety Culture system. • Ensure any damaged or non-functioning equipment is reported and promptly repaired or reinstated. • Report any areas of concern to their line manager or the Head of Health, Safety and Environment. • Report all fire incidents, including near misses, as per the Accidents & Incidents Policy (C014P).
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	• Ensure any statutory prohibition, enforcement, alterations, or similar notices are reported to the Health & Safety Team and ensure a remedial action plan is prepared and implemented. • Attend training courses relevant to their work to maintain competence levels. 4.9 All Abbeyfield staff members are responsible for: • Being aware of fire risks and to report concerns, including any malfunctioning fire safety equipment, to their line manager. • Attending the relevant fire safety training courses for their role.
5 Finance, Value for Money & Social Value	N/A
6 Linked policies	• Accidents and Incidents Policy (C014P) • Health and Safety Policy (YH009P) • Smoking and Vaping Policy (S026P)
7 Relevant Legislation / Regulation	• Building Safety Act (2021) • Care Act (2014) • Fire Safety (England) Regulations (2022) • Fire Safety Act (2021) • Housing Act (2004) • Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (2005)
8 Guidance	Abbeyfield Fire Safety Guidance Document Care Homes – HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment Guide for Residential Care Premises Specialised Housing (i.e. Sheltered Housing / Independent Living) (England and Wales only) – National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Guide to Fire Safety in Specialised Housing
9 Review	Every 3 years, subject to any regulatory or legislative updates.

10 Procedure(s)	10.1 Fire Evacuation Strategies and Fire Warden/Marshal Responsibilities 10.2 Completion and Management of Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) 10.3 Completion and Management of External Wall Fire Risk Assessments 10.4 Communicating Fire Safety Information to Residents 10.5 Managing Unwanted Fire Signals and False Alarms 10.6 Undertaking and Recording Fire Drills 10.7 Delivery and Completion of Fire Safety Training 10.8 Placement and Use of Fire Evacuation Equipment 10.9 Installation and Use of P50 Fire Extinguishers 10.10 Emergency Information and Equipment Provision 10.11 Use and Management of Fire Alarm Receiving Centres (ARCs) 10.12 Completing Fire Safety Compliance Checks 10.13 Completion of PCFRAs & PEEPs 10.14 Supporting residents no longer able to self-evacuate in Housing services 10.15 Management of Fire Rated Furniture and Furnishings 10.16 Management of Dangerous and Hazardous Substances 10.17 Managing the risk of Lithium Batteries 10.18 Management of Portable Heaters 10.19 Management of Fire Shutters 10.2 Sprinkler and Wet Chemical System Management 10.21 Management of External Escape Stairways 10.22 Seasonal Fire Safety
11 Process Map(s)	N/A