



**Nottingham**  
**City Homes**

# FIRE SAFETY POLICY



Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 1 of 15

## POLICY STATEMENT

Nottingham City Homes (NCH) manages Nottingham City Council's rented and leasehold homes. We are responsible for the day to day management of around 29,000 homes including services such as repairs, rent collection and tenancy management. We are also responsible for looking after around 1,000 leasehold properties.

We operate from our head office at 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham, and from other locations including a works depot, area housing offices, call centres and administrative offices.

This is our fire safety policy, produced in accordance with article 11(1) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

We recognise and accept our duty to comply with our statutory fire safety obligations. We also aim to achieve a higher standard when and where the opportunity arises to benefit our tenants, lease holders and members of staff.

We shall maintain suitable and safe premises and implement management systems to make sure the correct training, operation and maintenance regimes are in place.

Our Chief Executive Officer is our nominated responsible person and is responsible for the management of the fire policy at executive level. He can appoint other NCH managers to help him carry out this role and function. They may in turn appoint others to carry out specific tasks within their area of control. Managers shall make sure that all those given responsibility in this area will get sufficient training, time and resources to effectively carry out the tasks, associated record keeping and the monitoring needed to comply with fire safety standards.

There will be sufficient managerial supervision to make sure tasks are completed and actions are suitably recorded to create a clear audit trail. If our employees don't comply with fire safety procedures they could face disciplinary action, which in serious cases, could escalate into a criminal investigation and trial.

Nottingham City Homes has appointed a Fire Safety and First Aid Officer to provide the company and its officers with advice and support. This person will also liaise with the Fire Authority and Building Control on all matters relating to fire safety, including the construction of new buildings, and material alterations to existing premises.

Chief Executive Officer

Date

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 2 of 15

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT**

Determination and review of the Nottingham City Homes fire safety policy is a matter reserved for Board under standing orders.

Responsibility for managing fire safety at an operational level is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, who in turn delegates responsibility for managing specific parts of the fire safety policy to company managers through the Executive Management Team.

Company managers will delegate specific tasks to other employees or contractors, as shown in appendices 1 - 5. However, managers will retain responsibility for making sure that the tasks are properly carried out, and that they report exceptions to the Chief Executive Officer through the appropriate executive director.

Diagram 1 shows how fire safety responsibility is delegated in our organisation:

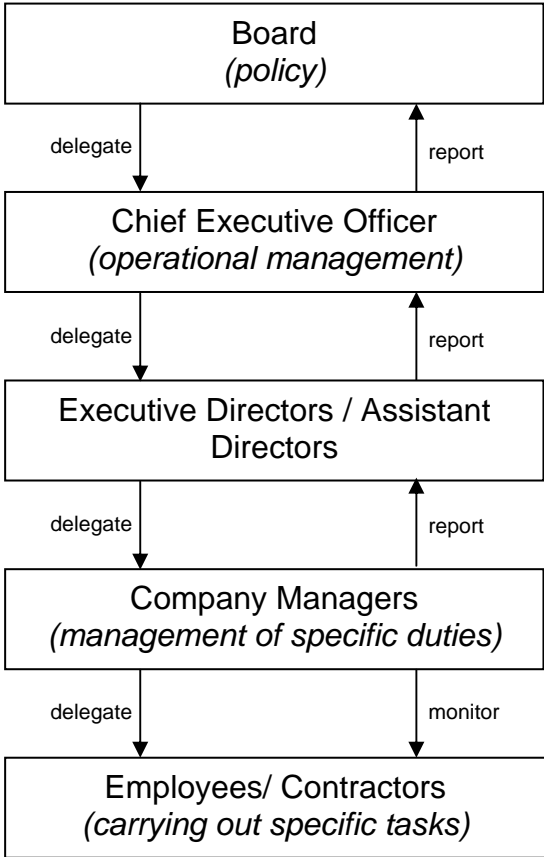


diagram 1

Formal fire safety monitoring processes, in addition to that shown above, are described at appendix 5.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 3 of 15

**Managers** holding specific fire safety duties are as follows. Duties are those described in the relevant paragraph of the policy, and some duties may apply to more than one post holder:

**Property Services Directorate**

<u>Company Manager</u>	<u>Duties (refer to paragraph in policy)</u>
Asset Data Manager	1.2;1.4; 1.5; 2.2; 1.3; 1.4; 14.2
Fleet and Facilities Manager	1.4; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(d); 9.2
Head of Repairs & Maintenance	1.4; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 6.1(e); 14.2
Head of Service - Capital Programme	2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 4.5; 6.1(e);10.1;10.2; 10.3; 11.3
Service Improvement Manager	9.2; 9.2
Service Manager Repairs Contact Centre	1.4; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 4.2; 6.1(d); 9.2

**Housing Services Directorate**

<u>Company Manager</u>	<u>Duties (refer to paragraph in policy)</u>
Assistant Director Tenancy & Estate Management	1.4; 1.5
Area Housing Managers	1.2;1.4; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 3.8; 4.1; 6.1(b); 6.1(d); 9.2; 11.2; 13.1; 14.2
City lettings Manager	6.1(c); 7.6; 12.1; 12.2
Estate and Caretaker Services Manager	1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 2.2; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(d); 9.2; 14.2
Hostel Manager (Highwood House)	1.4; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(d); 9.2
Nottingham on Call Manager	1.4; 3.5; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(b); 6.1(d); 9.2
Sheltered Housing Manager	1.4; 3.5; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(b); 6.1(d); 9.2

**Organisational Development Directorate**

<u>Company Manager</u>	<u>Duties (refer to paragraph in policy)</u>
Facilities Manager (Hounds Gate)	1.4; 2.3; 2.5; 4.1; 6.1(d); 9.2
Head of Health & Safety	1.2; 1.3; 1.4; 2.2; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; 3.5; 3.6; 3.7; 3.9; 3.11; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 6.1(a - e); 6.2; 7.1; 7.2; 7.3; 7.4; 7.5; 7.6; 8.1; 8.2; 8.3; 9.1; 9.2; 9.3; 11.2; 13.1; 13.2; 14.2
Head of Learning & Development	5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 6.1(a)

**Strategy & Partnerships Directorate**

<u>Company Manager</u>	<u>Duties (refer to paragraph in policy)</u>
Head Of Communications & Marketing	6.2

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 4 of 15

The **Head of Health and Safety** shall appoint a Fire Safety Officer to assist him with the performance of his duties, and to provide competent advice to company managers as required by Article 18 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

All **line managers** are responsible for promoting fire safety within their team, and for passing on any corporate message that has been provided in the corporate team brief. They shall also periodically make sure that all their team members know what to do in the event of a fire alarm.

**Line managers** of persons who may, by reason of a disability, not know that an alarm has been raised or find it difficult to leave the building quickly, have additional responsibilities as described in part 7 of this policy.

**Employees who manage works carried out by contractors** must make sure, with the assistance of the Construction Health and Safety Officer, that contractors under their control plan and carry out their works to avoid or minimise fire risk.

All Nottingham City Homes **employees** must, according to their level of training and knowledge, report any situation that they would reasonably consider to be a serious and immediate danger to their safety or the safety of other employees or that of any tenant or resident.

All Nottingham City Homes **employees** must, according to their level of training and knowledge, report any failure by any person to properly implement this fire safety policy.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 5 of 15

## FIRE SAFETY POLICY

### 1 Fire risk assessment

- 1.1 Risk assessments are essential for good fire safety management, and we are required by law to carry them out. The risk assessment process ensures that measures taken to prevent or mitigate fire risks are appropriate, relevant and realistic.
- 1.2 We (Nottingham City Homes) shall carry out and review fire risk assessments in our workplaces and in the residential buildings that we manage as shown at appendix 1.
- 1.3 Fire risk assessments shall address each of the following items:
- the occupation of the building
  - the risk of fires starting
  - the risk of fires spreading
  - the risk of people being trapped by fire
  - the storage and use of dangerous substances
  - the storage of flammable materials
  - measures to prevent or reduce fire risks, including the provision of fire prevention and protection equipment
  - additional risks to vulnerable people, including young people.
  - what to do in an emergency.
- 1.4 We shall review each risk assessment periodically as shown at appendix 1, or sooner if:
- there is a material alteration to the fabric or use of the building
  - there is any reason to suspect the assessment is no longer valid.
- 1.5 The officer responsible for reviewing each risk assessment shall record the date when the assessment was last reviewed, the changes made and the preventative actions taken since the last assessment.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 6 of 15

## 2 Fire prevention, protection and escape equipment

2.1 For the purpose of this policy, fire prevention, protection and escape equipment includes:

- fire detection and alarm systems
- individual heat and smoke detectors
- fire doors, including door furniture and self closers
- automatic fire door release systems
- automatic and static smoke vents
- fire escape doors, including quick release mechanisms
- fire extinguishers, fire blankets and fire hoses
- sprinklers and dry and wet risers
- emergency lighting systems
- fire signs and notices
- fire fighting lifts
- evacuation chairs.

2.2 We shall establish the level of fire prevention, protection and escape equipment that we need during the risk assessment process.

2.3 We shall inspect and test fire prevention, protection and escape equipment as detailed at appendix 2.

2.4 We shall inspect and test active fire alarm systems that are fitted in the common parts of buildings that are managed by us weekly, unless shown otherwise at appendix 2.

2.5 We shall record all inspections, tests and service visits in the on-site logbook where one is available. Where logbooks are not available, records will be maintained off site by the responsible person - refer to appendix 2. The Head of Health and Safety is responsible for designing and providing logbooks.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 7 of 15

### 3 Emergency (fire) procedures

3.1 We shall develop and implement emergency procedures to protect life and reduce the spread of fire in the event of a fire starting in any of the premises listed below:

- all our permanent workplaces normally occupied by five or more people
- all the high rise buildings that we manage
- all the sheltered schemes that we manage
- all hostels that we manage
- other buildings identified by risk assessment.

3.2 Emergency plans shall include the following:

- the means of detecting a fire and raising the alarm
- the means of escape to a place of safety
- the means of accounting for building occupants
- the provision and use of fire fighting equipment
- the provision of information for the Fire & Rescue Service
- any provision of competent people to assist with the plan
- any additional requirements to ensure the safety of disabled or other vulnerable people.

3.3 In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to implement a stay-put policy than an evacuation plan, especially in residential buildings. Where this is the case, it must be clearly stated in the emergency plan.

3.4 We shall consult with the Fire & Rescue Service during the development or review of our emergency plans.

3.5 We shall review our emergency plans at least once every 24 months, or at any time, if there is reason to suspect that they are no longer suitable.

3.6 We shall test our emergency plans in workplaces and hostels at least once every six months, although we may count unplanned evacuations as a test of the emergency plan. In any case, we shall record each test in the building logbook. It is not our policy to test emergency plans in residential buildings.

3.7 We shall appoint and train sufficient people to assist in the event of an emergency in each of the relevant workplaces. We shall also make sure that all employees know who these people are, what their role is and how to contact them.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 8 of 15

- 3.8 Where we occupy part of a building that is managed by another organisation, we will cooperate with the building manager during the planning and implementation of their emergency procedures.
- 3.9 We do not intend to appoint people to assist with the emergency plan in residential buildings as it is not the nature of our business to do so. However, we shall make sure that residents of high rise buildings, sheltered schemes, hostels and other relevant buildings are given information about their evacuation plan in a clear format that is suitable for their needs. We shall also provide out of hours contact numbers for relevant company officers to our emergency call centre so that such officers can be contacted when requested by the Fire & Rescue Service.
- 3.10 Responsibility for preparing and reviewing emergency plans is detailed at appendix 4.
- 3.11 We shall review our existing emergency fire plans in each workplace to make sure that they robustly address the needs of visitors who, on account of a disability, may need assistance or may experience difficulty when exiting the building.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 9 of 15

## 4 Maintenance and improvement works

- 4.1 We shall develop and implement a planned service and maintenance schedule as detailed at appendix 3 to make sure that all relevant fire prevention, protection and escape equipment remains in good working order.
- 4.2 Repairs work arising from the routine inspections and tests carried out as shown at appendix 2 will be categorised into 'significant' and 'minor' repairs. Significant repairs will be attended in 4 hours and repaired, where possible, within 3 working days.
- 4.3 Minor repairs will be carried out according to the company's published repair targets, usually within 28 days.
- 4.4 Where repairs cannot be carried out within target times, for example where replacement parts are not immediately available, a report will be made and forwarded to the Head of Repairs & Maintenance and to the Head of Health & Safety, containing the following details:
- a summary of the repairs ordered but not carried out that week
  - the date that each repair was requested
  - the reason that the repair could not be completed
  - the estimated date for completion
- 4.4 Repairs will be carried out by competent contractors or trained employees only.
- 4.5 The company's Fire Safety Officer will be consulted in good time, by the project manager, whenever a project is planned to:
- construct or occupy a new building
  - materially alter any part of an existing building
  - carry out fire safety improvement or refurbishment works
  - carry out planned maintenance or Decent Homes refurbishment works in high rise buildings, sheltered schemes or hostels.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 10 of 15

## 5 Training

- 5.1 The Head of Health & Safety, in consultation with the Head of Learning and Development, shall organise training to make sure that employees tasked with specific responsibilities under this policy are able to carry out their tasks in a competent and timely way.
- 5.2 The schedule of training will also include fire safety induction training as required by law.
- 5.3 The schedule of training shall include the training requirements listed at appendix 6.

## 6 Information

- 6.1 We shall provide fire safety information as follows:
- a. Employees
    - Our fire safety policy
    - The significant outcomes of fire risk assessments that affect them
    - Action to take in an emergency
    - Any relevant personal evacuation plan
    - The incident reporting process.
  - b. Occupants of residential buildings where an emergency plan is in place
    - Action to take in an emergency.
  - c. New tenants
    - General fire safety information
    - How to report defects.
  - d. Visitors to our workplaces
    - Action to take in an emergency.
  - e. Contractors
    - The identity of the person responsible for the building
    - Safety rules affecting their work
    - Information about dangerous or flammable materials
    - Action to take in an emergency.
- 6.2 The information that we provide will be in a clear and unambiguous format and language that is appropriate to meet individual needs.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 11 of 15

## 7 Disabled / vulnerable people

- 7.1 We shall take care during the application of all parts of this policy to make sure that the needs of disabled and other vulnerable people, who may be at a greater risk of harm from fire, are met.
- 7.2 We shall identify those employees who may have difficulty exiting a building quickly, and carry out a personal evacuation plan for each employee that requires one.
- 7.3 Personal evacuation plans will be carried out by line managers with the assistance of the Fire Safety Officer. A schedule of practices for each personal evacuation plan will be developed and the date and outcomes of each practice recorded by the line manager.
- 7.4 Personal evacuation plans shall be reviewed by the appropriate line manager annually, or whenever there is a significant change in the employee's work location, working hours or condition that would mean the assessment is no longer valid.
- 7.5 We shall work with the Fire & Rescue Service to identify opportunities to improve the safety of disabled and other vulnerable tenants and residents.
- 7.6 We shall review our allocations policies and procedures to make sure that we do not house new tenants or their families in properties that, by their location or design, would place them at an unacceptable risk of harm because of their disability or vulnerability. This will always be the case, unless reasonable adjustments can be made to prevent that risk or reduce it to an acceptable level.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 12 of 15

## 8 Fire investigations

8.1 We shall, where appropriate in consultation with Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service, investigate the causes and outcomes of fires in the following circumstances:

- Any unplanned fire in a workplace.
- A fire in a building managed by us causing the death of any person.
- Any fire causing significant damage to, or serious harm to the occupants of more than one dwelling managed by us.
- Any unplanned fire likely to have been caused by our actions or omissions.
- Any other fire not listed above that gives cause for serious concern.

8.2 Outcomes of fire investigations, including recommendations for action, shall be reported to the company's Executive Management Team.

8.3 Investigations shall be carried out by, or under the direction of, the company's Fire Safety Officer.

## 9 Monitoring and audit

9.1 We shall develop and implement procedures to check that the measures identified in this policy are carried out on time and are effective.

9.2 The checks that we will carry out are listed at appendix 5.

9.3 Significant exceptions identified during monitoring and audit checks will be included in the Head of Health & Safety's quarterly report to the company's Executive Management Team.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 13 of 15

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 10 Smoke alarms in dwellings

- 10.1 It is our policy to fit smoke alarms in each dwelling where a full rewire has been programmed. We shall also repair or replace existing smoke alarms that are found to be faulty or damaged.
- 10.2 We shall fit smoke alarms in other dwellings when our risk assessment demonstrates that it is necessary to do so.
- 10.3 Under normal circumstances we will only fit hard-wired smoke alarms with battery back up.

### 11 Fire fighting equipment in dwellings and common parts of residential buildings

- 11.1 It is our policy only to provide fire fighting equipment in locations where employees are available who have been trained to use it. In most cases, this will preclude the fitting of fire fighting equipment in dwellings and in the common parts of residential buildings.
- 11.2 It is therefore our policy not to provide fire fighting equipment in such areas unless there is an exceptional need identified by risk assessment. However, when this policy causes us to remove existing fire fighting equipment, we shall consult with the Fire & Rescue Service and notify residents before removing the equipment.
- 11.3 Where fire fighting equipment is provided specifically for use by the Fire & Rescue Service, we shall maintain that equipment as detailed at appendix 3.

### 12 Allocations and mutual exchanges

- 12.1 We shall carry out a fire safety check of all properties that are allocated to new tenants or where the tenancy changes due to a mutual exchange.
- 12.2 A check will be made of the following:
- the condition of any fitted smoke alarms
  - the presence and condition of internal doors
  - the condition of external doors and fire doors
  - whether keys are available for window locks
  - the operation of escape windows and doors.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 14 of 15

### 13 False alarms

13.1 We shall introduce systems to allow us to monitor the number, location and causes of false fire alarm activations. We shall use this information to:

- investigate the causes of recurring false alarms
- take action against people deliberately causing false alarms
- develop information about reducing false alarms and target the people who would benefit from this information
- identify where the replacement, repair or modification of fire detection and alarm equipment would reduce false alarm activations.

13.2 We shall work with the Fire & Rescue Service to reduce the incidence of false alarms.

### 14 Arson

14.1 We recognise that arson is a major and increasing cause of fires, especially in empty properties and wheelie bins.

14.2 Therefore, we shall;

- identify and manage arson risks within our risk assessment process
- secure wheeled bins provided for use by more than one household
- remove waste or furniture left in fire protected escape corridors and stairwells
- repair insecure entrance doors within 24 hours where possible
- screen void property doors and windows on ground and first floors
- always report arson or suspected arson to the police
- identify arson 'hot spots' and implement management measures such as increased security or CCTV where appropriate.
- take action where appropriate and within our jurisdiction against any person who deliberately sets fire to a property that we manage.

Nottingham City Homes Fire Safety Policy				
Issuing officer	Ian Rabett	Authorised by		
Issue date		Issue number	Draft	Page 15 of 15