



Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Electrical Safety Policy 2024

Electrical Safety Policy

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Introduction

Aim:

This policy sets out:

1. how Solihull Community Housing (SCH) will minimise the risk to and protect the health and wellbeing of residents, visitors, contractors and staff from unsafe fixed electrical installations and portable appliances (where applicable);
2. how SCH will comply with the legal duties implied upon landlords; and
3. a working framework for staff and Board Members which details their individual responsibilities.

Scope

This document relates to all properties owned, occupied or operated by SCH in its capacity as an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) on behalf of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical wiring and equipment that is supplied beyond the electric meter of a property. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the fabric of the building (walls, floors and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs).

This policy covers the repair, upgrading, testing and inspection of all electrical installations.

The policy also covers any electrical equipment, appliance or portable equipment owned by the organisation as defined within BS7671 and as detailed within the In Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (ISITEE) Guidance, but this does not cover those owned by tenants.

The policy also covers powered doors, gates, and barriers and lightning protection systems.

Link to Corporate Objectives

This policy answers to the following strategic aim:

‘Ensuring our homes and customers are safe’

For Additional Relevant Information- see Appendices

Appendix 1: Policy Context and Legislative Framework

Appendix 2: Process mapping

The Management Plan

Installations in SCH’s properties will be installed, maintained and serviced to the current legislation, standards and approved codes of practice, and inspected at appropriate intervals to minimise the risk of electrocution, fire, damage to property, injury and/or death.

All SCH properties will be tested at least every 5 years, or more frequently should a risk based analysis determine, allowing the property to conform to current regulations and guidelines (or on the date recommended by the Competent Person undertaking the previous test). However where there has been minor or other electrical work carried out at the relevant property in between the last know electrical test carried out and the next periodic test as per regulations then a renewed electrical test must be carried out to allow the property to be compliant. Each inspection/test will result in the creation of an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) as recommended by the Code of Practice for the Management of Electrotechnical Care in Social Housing January 2019 for all property types.

SCH will provide the tenant with a copy of the certificate within 28 days of a test.

SCH will undertake a periodic risk assessment of all lightning protection systems, powered gates, barriers, and pedestrian doors – the frequency of these cyclical assessments will be determined by the current legislation, standards and approved codes of practice, not exceeding more than one year per cycle, and will be conducted by a competent person in accordance with manufacturers instructions – generally, powered gates and barriers will be inspected and maintained 6 monthly and powered doors and lightning protection equipment will be inspected and maintained annually.

A regular electrical inspection programme will be managed through a live database – a register which records all data with relevant certificates and other documents held within a property specific file in the designated document storage repository. The register automatically flags when servicing and inspections are due and produces monitoring and performance reports. It also provides confirmation that the EICR was satisfactory or appropriate remedial works undertaken, the date of last test and the date of next test (as recommended by the Competent Person undertaking the test). It will also hold information on the required Portable Appliance Testing programme and the powered doors, gates, barriers and lightning protection systems programmes, flagging when tests are due.

A copy of the most current electrical certificate will be made available to the test engineer before the inspection.

All appointed electrical contractors will be registered with the NICEIC, ECA, NAPIT or other accredited body and will be registered under a recognised Domestic Installer Self-Certification Scheme in compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations. SCH will maintain a record of the qualification dates of individuals carrying out the electrical inspection service. Orders will not be created unless the qualifications are current.

Four categories of defects are used on electrical test certificates, namely:

C1: Danger present. Risk of injury - immediate remedial action required.

C2: Potentially dangerous – urgent remedial action required.

C3: Improvement recommended.

FI: Further Investigation.

Remedial works which are required to make the electrical installation safe and listed as C1 or C2 on the EICR will be completed by the inspecting engineer at the time of the inspection (where possible) or within 48 hours of the test. Remedial works which are listed as C3 and F1 will be undertaken within SCHs' responsive repairs timescales.

SCH will arrange for a proportion of EICR cyclical inspections to be audited by an independent specialist contractor (who is not connected with the contractor that carried out the EICR inspection). These audit inspections will be undertaken within 14 days of the EICR inspection.

All properties are let with a minimum standard of electrical fittings and fixtures, in line with the minimum re-let standard. No properties will be re-let until an electrical test has been carried out and the installation and electrical equipment has been determined to be safe. The EICR certificate is kept by SCH, the contractor and a copy handed to the new tenant.

Where any electrical equipment, appliance or portable equipment owned by the organisation as defined within BS7671 and as detailed within the In Service Inspection and Testing of

Electrical Equipment (ISITEE) Guidance is provided by SCH to the new tenant this will also be tested prior to re-let.

An electrical test is carried out on all properties involved in mutual exchange/transfer and the EICR certificates are kept by SCH and a copy handed to the transferring tenants.

The operation of existing mains wired smoke/heat/CO detection will be checked during an EICR inspection and any defective or expired detectors (including those likely to expire within the next 5 years) will be replaced. Contractors carrying out the annual gas, oil, LPG, ASHP and unvented cylinders services are required to report any broken detectors to SCH.

Where planned improvement works or reactive repairs are undertaken by SCH and (which) affect the electrical system or equipment, the system or equipment will be inspected and tested in accordance with current legislation, standards and codes of practices and appropriate electrical certification issued for the work carried out. Where a new EICR certificate is required, or a Minor Electrical Installation Works certificate is issued, the officer commissioning the work will ensure that the certificates are passed to the person responsible for managing the Electrical Safety Register.

Residents must seek authorisation in writing prior to any private alteration and improvement works being undertaken which will involve additions / alterations to the electrical installation. If any installation has been interfered with without SCH permission and is found to be defective, the defective or unauthorised works needing rectification will incur a recharge. If works are approved, residents are responsible for ensuring appropriate safety checks are carried out and all relevant certificates are supplied to SCH.

Guidance on electrical safety will be included in the Tenant Handbook, the SCH website and once a year in the tenant newsletter, and an Information Leaflet will be provided to all new tenants when letting homes. Tenants will also be made aware of their obligations to allow access, immediate if necessary, for the association's staff or its contractors to carry out its maintenance, safety checking, servicing and repairing obligations through these means and in the conditions of their tenancy agreement.

Electrical disrepair can be reported by residents to SCH under the reactive repairs service; SCH will decide on the response category (based on risk) and will issue a works order for the engineer to undertake the scheduled repair and/or test in accordance with the allocated response time.

All new installations will be provided with an Electrical Installation Certificate complete with a schedule of inspections and test results. The documents will be suitably completed and in full compliance with BS 7671, IET Guidance Notes and all current amendments.

SCH will carry out an annual reconciliation exercise to ensure that every new-build property has been recorded on the electrical installation testing programme (the Electrical Safety Register).

All portable electrical equipment owned/managed by SCH will be subject to yearly portable appliance test (PAT). Appropriate labelling of equipment and recording of all equipment will be undertaken in accordance with current legislation, standards and approved codes of practice. Residents' portable electrical equipment is not the responsibility of SCH and will not be PAT tested.

All EICR certificates will be retained for a period of at least 12 years.

In leaseholder properties, SCH has no responsibility for the electrical safety activity described in this policy. However, in view of the fact that defective electrical installations could jeopardise both other residents and the building asset, SCH will write to the leaseholder every five years asking for written confirmation that any work to the installation has been undertaken by a person competent to do so and that an inspection is not overdue, and that the installation is full compliance with all relevant legislation.

Those tenants that are known to be vulnerable will, in appropriate circumstances, receive a higher priority, recognising their needs. The Associations contractor selection process will require the contractor to have arrangements in place to deal appropriately with vulnerable tenants as a minimum level duty of care.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive (Duty Holder)

The CEO has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The key responsibilities are to ensure the organisation has sufficient resources and systems in place to achieve and maintain statutory compliance, including but not limited to:

- Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage electrical safety.
- Ensuring sufficient information instruction and training is carried out.
- Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors.
- Ensuring that members of the public, staff and contractors are not unnecessarily exposed to risk.

Although overall responsibility for Health & Safety in the workplace rests with the Chief Executive, management responsibilities will be delegated through the Organisational Structure. Executive Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Managers, Line Managers and Staff at all levels of the organisation are therefore responsible for Health & Safety at Work, though the extent of this responsibility varies according to the individual's position in the organisation.

Executive Directors

Executive Directors will assist and deputise for the Chief Executive and are responsible for the overall effectiveness of the electrical safety policy in their areas of responsibility. They are required to nominate a deputy from within their own Directorate to liaise as required with the Responsible Person. The nominated Deputy should be a relevant Head of Service or Senior Manager who will assist and deputise for the Director. Directors will be required to:

- Have overall responsibility for compliance with the Management of the Electrical Safety Policy in their Directorate
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to manage risk arising from electrical installations.
- Monitor the performance of their employees against the policy.
- Ensure sufficient information instruction and training is carried out
- Advise the Chief Executive of any problem arising in connection with the management of electrical safety.

Heads of Service

Heads of Service will act as nominated deputy for their Executive Director where required.
Heads of Service will: -

- Have overall responsibility for compliance with the Management of the Electrical Safety Policy in their Service area.
- Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to manage risks arising from electrical installations.
- Ensure that managers fulfil their responsibilities relating to the management of electrical safety
- Ensure sufficient information instruction and training is carried out within their service area
- Monitor the performance of their employees against the policy.
- Advise their Director of any problem arising in connection with the management of electrical safety.

Head of Building Safety

The Head of Building Safety is nominated and appointed by the Chief Executive to manage the day to day procedures necessary for the management of electrical installations and be responsible for the strategic management of electrical safety within the responsibility of SCH.

The Head of Service has overall responsibility for delivering statutory compliance and is responsible for the preparation and monitoring of the policy, ensuring it meets with current legislation. Further areas of responsibility are:

- writing monitoring and reviewing the policy,
- ensuring risks associated with electrical installations and safety are managed effectively,
- Formulate and revise the SCH Policy every 3 years or following significant incident or change in legislation.
- Formulate and revise the Electrical Safety Management Plan.
- Facilitate Independent Expert assessments to ensure that the provisions within the Management Plan are being enforced to the standard required.
- Ensuring sufficient information instruction and training is carried out within their service area.
- Ensure risks arising from electrical related activities are recorded reviewed and mitigated.
- Ensure a designated deputy, The Safer Homes Team Manager is available in their absence to manage the day to day procedures and be responsible for the strategic management of electrical safety within the responsibility of SCH as well as any other duties the Head of Building Safety is responsible for should the need arise.

Contract Officer

The relevant Contract officer is responsible for the day to day running of the Electrical Safety Management Plan. The Contract Officer is responsible for:

- Must have a level of competence such as an engineering background to be able to monitor consultants' day to day delivery of works relating to electrical testing

and inspections and carrying out defect works as set out in certificates, reports etc,

- ensuring all related documentation complies with the Regulations and is correctly completed and stored onto the Electrical Safety Register
- acting promptly to remedy any defects,
- checking orders and invoices are correctly matched and authorising them and passing them for payment.
- monitoring the performance of maintenance staff and contractors,
- ensuring that residents, members of the public, employees and contractors are not unnecessarily exposed to risk,
- running regular monthly status reports to the Safer Homes Team Manager,

Health, Safety & Risk Service

The Health, Safety & Risk Service is responsible for providing a competent advisory service to SCH.

The Health, Safety & Risk Service will also give guidance relating to suitable training to effectively manage risks arising from the management of electrical installations.

They will also ensure that all accidents/incidents/near misses reported that are notifiable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) are reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

Employees

All Employees of SCH, irrespective of their position shall:

- Take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety and that of other persons who may be adversely affected by electrical installations, including members of the public, tenants, visitors and contractors.
- Co-operate with Solihull Community Housing and its managers to enable compliance with this policy and the legal duties it holds.
- Halt works that, in their opinion, may present a serious risk to health of themselves or others.
- Report any incident involving electrical safety without delay.

Tenants and Leaseholders

This policy is to be read in conjunction with Solihull Council's current Tenancy Agreement or Terms of Lease.

- Tenants will allow reasonable access to SCH or its contractors to undertake activity in compliance with this policy.
- Tenants will not interfere with the electrical installation in any way unless permission has been granted by SCH
- Tenant will report any defects in the electrical installation that they are aware of.

Contractors

This policy is to be read in conjunction with SCH's Code of Conduct for Contractors. Contractors are required to immediately report any risks or concerns to the respective SCH Contract Officer or Project Manager and stop ongoing works until they are satisfied their concerns have been mitigated.

Contractors will not work on any electrical systems and equipment unless competent to do so.

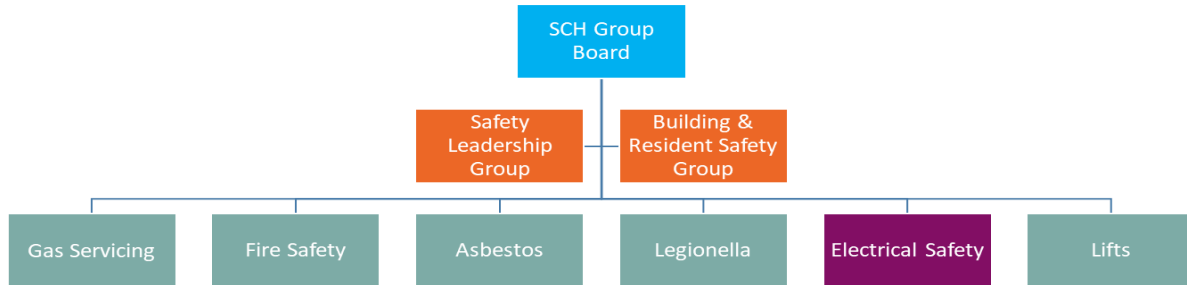
All contractors deemed competent to work on electrical systems and equipment will be able to prove registration to a governing body covering the area of work being completed and hold a relevant insurance cover for the same aspect. Hold up to date copies of all standards and regulations within the area of work carried or completed. Demonstrate adherence and use of information made available to them through this policy through testing as part of SCH's ongoing audit regime.

- provide required inspection certificates / reports to SCH within 7 days of undertaking the site activity
- Comply with SCH's Health and Safety Policy
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- Consider the safety of other persons
- Report to management any unsafe acts or unsafe conditions that may compromise the health, safety or welfare of themselves or others, DON'T WALK BY!
- Notify SCH of any serious Health and Safety incident or near miss

The contractor is to provide SCH with relevant certification and evidence of competency prior to commencing works and is to provide SCH with copies of all legally required, and relevant documentation upon completion of works.

Communication

All SCH employees and stakeholders are required to immediately report any concerns regarding electrical safety directly to their line manager. To support this approach a formal communication system is established within SCH's communication framework to provide specialist advice and support to the organisation, as illustrated below.



Training

Solihull Community Housing shall ensure that adequate information, instruction, and training is given to their employees at levels proportionate to the risks of exposure and their roles. Solihull Community Housing will undertake regular training of managers and staff, regular building users and contracted third parties,

The Head of Building Safety will ensure that all staff responsible for electrical safety management and all appointed responsible persons:

- will receive appropriate training and annual refresher training.
- training records are up to date
- all staff currently working in this area have received appropriate training in the required timeframe.
- A record of all training completed will be kept electronically through Learning Pool

Managers are responsible for ensuring all relevant staff attend the applicable training course.

Customer Contact

SCH will use all reasonable methods of consultation and communication to increase customer's awareness and its own information regarding the hazards posed by electrical installations within the stock portfolio.

Tenants

Customers will be given a copy of the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) that relates to their tenancy before the start of the tenancy agreement.

SCH will provide guidance notes to tenants and leaseholders regarding electrical safety. These guidance notes will be available to view on our website, and information will be communicated to our customers on a regular basis through varying communication channels.

SCH will contact the tenant by letter up to three times before the anniversary of the cyclical inspection test to arrange the next test.

Tenants will be required to provide reasonable access to SCH or its contractors to undertake activity in compliance with this policy. If the tenant does not provide access, SCH will deal with the refusal as a failure to comply with tenancy conditions and legal access injunction will be pursued. Tenants will be charged in full for any legal costs involved in obtaining access

Right to Buy Applicants

Under a Right to Buy application, a new electrical inspection condition report is carried out and provided to the new owner prior to occupation. Any identified category 1 and 2 repairs are remedied prior to handover.

Existing Leaseholders and Owner Occupiers

Once the property has been sold, electrical safety is not the responsibility of the Council or Solihull Community Housing within the actual dwelling itself. The owner-occupier should be given advice on how to safely manage electrical installations within their home.

Monitoring

Performance against key performance indicators relevant to this policy will be reported to the Director of Assets and Development and the Executive Management Team at least monthly. Performance and risks arising from this policy will be monitored by the Building and Resident Safety Group Board (BRSG). Quarterly update reports will be provided to SCH Group Board.

Review

This Policy shall be reviewed by the Head of Building Safety every three years, or if there are any significant changes to current Electrical Safety Legislation, HSE approved codes of practice or guidance, or as the result of the outcome of an incident review.

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| Policy Owner | <i>Executive Director Operations</i> |
| Policy Author | <i>Jaspal Rehal, Building Safety Manager</i> |
| Review Date | <i>May 2027</i> |

Appendix 1

Policy Context and Legislative Framework

Electricity is a major cause of accidental fires in UK homes with over 20,000 incidents each year attributed to this causal factor.

The Electrical Safety Council has said that ‘millions of people in the UK risk death or injury because of their ignorance about household electricity’.

Each week on average, at least one person dies from household electrical accidents, and annually 350,000 people are injured, the ESC said.

ESC research shows that 49% of accidental house fires are caused by electricity, despite 88% of the population owning smoke alarms.

The ESC estimates that more than 12 million people a year in the UK could be knowingly using faulty plugs or sockets,

Most electrical fires are caused by faulty electrical outlets (receptacles) or worn out sockets that are not properly grounded. As outlets and switches get older, the wiring behind them wears as well, and wires are strung about that loosen overtime and could potentially break and cause a fire.

Old, outdated wiring poses a fire hazard. As electrical components age or become overloaded, the system can overheat and wear out insulation. This can lead to arcs (electrical discharge) and short circuits — the two main causes of home electrical wiring fires, according to the CPSC.

However, nine out of 10 (89%) electrical fires are caused by electrical products. A relatively small percentage (11%) are caused by faults in installations or by people not using installations properly. Key fire facts:

- 46 deaths per year*
- 2,469 injuries per year*
- Over £100 million in damage to private property.
- Faulty appliances alone cause £41.6 million of damage per year, with electric cookers (£24m) and lighting (£13m) among the largest contributors.

Regulatory Requirements and Guidance

The following list sets out the key legislation and guidance:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, 1987, 1988
- Housing Act 1988, 2004.
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.
- Building Regulations (including Part P requirements).
- Right to Repair Scheme (introduced 1994).
- The Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974.
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
- Requirements for Electrical Installation IET Wiring Regulations 18th Edition BS7671: 2018 (including all amendments).
- IET Guidance Notes and all current amendments.
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- In Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (ISITEE)
- Defective Premises Act 1972.
- Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Code of Practice for the Management of Electrotechnical Care in Social Housing January 2019.

SCH are committed to achieving compliance with the 18th Edition of the Institution of Engineering and Technology Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2018), which came into effect on 1st January 2019. All domestic wiring installations must now be designed, constructed, inspected, tested and certificated to meet the requirements of BS 7671:2019. Contractors undertaking electrical installation work must be registered through the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC) the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA), National Association for Professional Inspectors (NAPIT) or other accredited body. Where 'notifiable' works are required contractors must be registered with a competent person self-certification scheme, in order to certify compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations. Individual engineers working on electrical installations must be trained, competent and hold a relevant industry recognised qualification.

Appendix 2

Process Mapping

Electrical Servicing “as is” V1.1

Electrical Servicing and resulting Remedial actions – Reporting Process

