



FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Lead Manager:	Compliance Manager
Responsible Senior Manager:	Assistant Director of Assets
Approved By:	STAR Board
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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline Shropshire Towns & Rural Housing's (STAR) approach to managing Fire Safety in properties under the organisation's supervision and control. This policy offers a framework within which fire safety will be directed and outlines essential roles and responsibilities for the implementation of this policy.
- 1.2 The Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP) will detail STAR's operational methodology for managing fire safety, which includes monitoring and accountability, the assessment of fire risk, remedial actions to mitigate fire risk, and the maintenance of electrical and mechanical fire systems within our portfolio.
- 1.3 The operational procedures in the FSMP specify how STAR will fulfil the statutory obligation detailed in this policy, and as such, the FSMP is enforceable through this policy.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 STAR acknowledges its duty of care towards employees, residents, contractors, visitors, and others who may be potentially at risk from Fire in premises managed and controlled by the organisation.
- 2.2 This policy supports STAR in fulfilling its role as the managing agent a managing agent and employer. It also supports Shropshire Council in fulfilling its legal responsibilities as a landlord and a registered provider. It aims to provide assurance that fire safety is appropriately managed.

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 STAR is devoted, as far as reasonably practicable, to guaranteeing the health, safety, and welfare of persons at its premises. A reasonably foreseeable risk from fire exists in STAR managed properties. STAR recognises that it is the legal Duty Holder for its premises, and has an obligation to safeguard its customers, employees, those who operate in STAR premises and others from risks associated with fire safety.
- 3.2 The Regulator of Social Housing and Home Standard demands Registered Providers to fulfil all applicable legal requirements for the health and safety of customers in their homes, which includes fire safety management.
- 3.3 To satisfy our legal duties regarding Fire Safety Management, STAR will adhere to our responsibilities under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO 2005), Fire Safety Act 2021, Building Safety Act 2022, and The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022. To conform with the duties in these regulations, STAR will:

In reference to the RRO 2005 as amended by the Fire Safety Act 2021 –

- Conduct fire risk assessments at least every 12-months or earlier if there is reason to suspect that the most recent risk assessment is no longer valid.

- Hire appropriately qualified and competent contractors to execute fire risk assessments and fire safety related works.
- Respond to recommendations made by specialist contractors engaged by STAR to carry out fire risk assessments.
- Implement general fire precautions aimed at identifying and dealing with fire hazards.
- Ensure adequate measures are in place to prevent the spread of fire.
- Make certain that means of escape can be safely and effectively utilized.
- Confirm that resources for combating fires are available and are in line with the fire strategy of each premise.
- Assure that provisions for detecting fires and issuing early warnings are available according to the fire strategy of each premise.
- Provide sufficient instruction and training to occupants and users on actions to be taken in the event of a fire.
- Ensure appropriate training is offered to employees designated as fire marshals.
- Carry out fire drills to support the information provided to individuals necessary to aid the evacuation strategy for each premise where applicable.
- Confirm that any facilities, equipment, and devices provided for safety purposes are maintained properly and in good working condition.

In relation to The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 – (where applicable)

- Install and maintain a secure information box at high-rise residential buildings following the regulations.
- Inspect the secure information box at least annually and ensure it continues to meet the requirements outlined in the regulations.
- Prepare and keep an updated record of design and materials of external walls for high-rise buildings and supply an electronic copy to the fire and rescue authority.
- Prepare and maintain up-to-date floor plans and building plans for each floor of a high-rise residential building and provide an electronic copy to the fire and rescue authority.
- Conduct monthly routine checks of lifts for use by firefighters, evacuation lifts, and essential firefighting equipment situated in high-rise residential buildings.

- Ensure high-rise residential buildings have clear markings for floor identification and identification of domestic premises.
- Display fire safety instructions for residents in any building within the scope of the regulations.
- Provide a current copy of fire safety and fire door information to new residents and to all residents within each 12-month period or after any significant changes to the instructions previously issued.
- Use best endeavours to perform checks of individual domestic fire doors at least every 12 months for buildings within the scope of the regulations.
- Conduct checks of any fire doors in communal areas of buildings at least every 3 months for buildings within the scope of the regulations.

In connection with the Building Safety Act 2022 – (where applicable)

- Ensure all occupied higher-risk buildings within its stock portfolio are registered with the regulator.
- Display building assessment certificate for higher-risk buildings as required by the regulations.
- Take necessary action where recommendations are made by the regulator to enhance safety.
- Perform assessments of building safety risks and undertake additional assessments at regular intervals when there is reason to believe that the most recent assessment is no longer valid or when directed to do so by the regulator.
- Take suitable action to manage building safety risks.
- Prepare and keep an updated safety case report for each higher-risk building.
- Preserve information and records to evidence compliance with this regulation.
- Develop a resident engagement strategy for promoting the participation of relevant persons in making building safety decisions.

In connection with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022

- Install as a minimum, a smoke detector to each storey of a building (hallways and landings) and a carbon monoxide detector to any habitable room with a fixed combustion appliance (except gas cookers). In addition to this, STAR has committed to investing in upgrading its smoke detection systems within its properties to a minimum LD2 standard when redundant and / or expired systems need replacing.

- STAR will ensure each smoke and carbon monoxide detector is checked and in working order on the first day of any new tenancy. Where repairs or replacements are required, STAR will act in accordance to its legal requirements.

4. Related Documents

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Building Safety Act 2022
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Housing Act 2004
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

5. Scope of Policy

5.1 This policy applies to all STAR staff, contractors, and others carrying out works in STAR premises.

5.2 This policy applies to the following locations: -

- Rented properties including garages
- Communal areas.
- Offices and storage facilities.
- Commercial leaseholders where STAR retains the responsibility to maintain all or part of the building.
- Leaseholders and shared owners, living in self-contained accommodation, where STAR retains the responsibility to maintain all or part of the building.

5.3 We will undertake consultation as required with 'variable service charge payers', such as Leaseholders, on a works or contract-specific basis where works costs allocated per property are over £250, or £100 per annum under a qualifying long-term agreement. Details and procedures are within the Leaseholder Section 20 Consultation Policy.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Accountable Person

Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing (STAR) operates as an Arm's Length Management Organisation, acting on behalf of Shropshire Council to oversee the upkeep and administration of the Council's housing assets. This delegation of authority is outlined in the Council's official policies, and the management agreement, empowering STAR to manage these responsibilities efficiently.

The Accountable Person ultimately remains as Shropshire Council.

6.2 Duty Holder

Duty Holder	Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing
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The *Duty Holder* and is responsible for

- Management of systems and equipment, and for
- Ensuring that appropriate measures are identified to adequately manage risk within all premises under STAR's control.
- Quality assurance of work carried out on systems and equipment by STAR employees and contractors and that all works conform to the relevant requirements.

6.3 The Managing Director holds ultimate responsibility for health and safety across the organisation and will nominate suitably qualified and experienced individuals to discharge those duties concerning fire safety management.

6.4 The Board has the overall governance responsibility for ensuring that STAR is compliant with regulatory standards, legislation, and codes of practice. The role of the Board includes:

- Approving key H&S policies
- Being cognizant of risks and risk controls in place
- Agreeing on performance targets and a performance monitoring framework
- Ensuring the availability of adequate resources and competencies for fulfilling policy commitments
- Ensuring suitable reporting and auditing activity
- Listening to the voice of customers

6.2 Under this policy, STAR has identified the following appropriate persons within the organisation to manage this area of risk with the support of appointed specialist contractors and consultants. Only competent and suitably qualified contractors will be appointed by STAR.

6.5 Policy Management and Assurance

Deputy Duty Holder	Position:	Operations Director
	Responsibilities:	Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the policy objectives to be met. To ensure that appropriately qualified and suitably experienced people are employed to implement this policy, that appropriate programmes of work are in place to discharge relevant duties.
Responsible Person	Position:	Compliance Manager
	Responsibilities:	Ensuring the fire safety management plan is implemented, relevant, current and practical. To ensure that all activity required for compliance with this policy is carried out. Provision of quarterly performance reports to the Board as part of the governance framework. Reviewing the management plan every 12 months with all relevant parties to ensure the systems outlines in the plan are working.
	Position:	Fire Safety Team Leader

Competent Person	Responsibilities:	<p>Administer associated contracts and act as the first point of contact for fire safety related queries.</p> <p>Ensure effective management of STAR's fire safety programmes and risk register.</p> <p>Guarantee that fire safety information is available for relevant persons.</p> <p>Facilitating communication between the employees, contractors, fire safety professionals and residents concerning matters related to fire safety for locations within the scope of this policy.</p>
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Under the existing Fire Safety Regulations, anyone entering a building that is subject to these rules is responsible for maintaining fire safety.

7. Policy Equality and Diversity Statement

- 7.1 STAR is committed to valuing and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across our services. We recognise our duty to eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination in the services we provide, and to promote and value respect in everything we do. We expect our staff to share these values and treat all customers with fairness and respect. We also require our contractors and suppliers to mirror our values and comply with our policies in this respect and their own respective duties.
- 7.2 STAR will uphold a zero-tolerance response to acts of discrimination.
- 7.3 STAR recognises that customers have different needs and may require a tailored and reasonable adjustment to our service to access our services or a property feature, either on a permanent or temporary basis.
- 7.4 STAR will ensure it meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to consider the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
 - Advance equality of opportunity
 - Foster good relations between different parts of the community

7.5 All contractors employed by STAR or carrying out works on STAR managed premises are required to adhere to the commitments we have made to valuing and promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion across our services.

8. Communication

8.1 STAR will ensure that appropriate Fire Safety information is provided to relevant persons on our website and upon request.

8.2 STAR will ensure effective emergency procedures are in place and that staff and contractors are clear on their responsibilities.

8.3 STAR will promote awareness of fire-related risks through training and induction of relevant staff. The training will be designed to fit the needs and roles of the employees being trained.

8.4 To ensure that appropriate and suitable training is provided to staff, STAR will carry out training needs assessments where appropriate.

8.5 STAR has adopted and is undertaking surveys in accordance with the Regulatory standard tenant satisfaction measures. These will be utilised to address any reports on outstanding works, issues or concerns that warrant further action or learning and will be shared with our contractors' delivering services.