Blackwood
homes | care | support

Fire Safety Policy

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Date Revision Complete	September 2016
Procedure Owner	Health & Safety Advisor
Author	Alex Brown
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Proof Read	Simon Fitzpatrick, Strategic Development Director
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Internal References	Personal Emergency Egress Plan Fire Risk Assessment Template

External References	*N/A*

Comments: Issue 6 changes include reformatting to bring it into line with current policies, updated responsibilities to reflect staff changes, removal of 3 yearly practical fire training for all staff and updated risk matrix for completion of fire risk assessment actions. Also links to new Fire Risk Assessment Form and Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEP).

CONTENTS

1.   Fire Safety Policy Statement of Intent

Blackwood believes that ensuring the health and safety of staff, customers, contractors and all other relevant persons is essential to our success.

This fire safety policy has been prepared to ensure that the risk from fire will be managed in compliance with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire (Scotland) Regulations 2006

This policy aims to prevent fire incidents occurring, to initiate prompt and effective action in the event of an incident and to ensure that staff, customers, contractors and all other relevant persons who may be affected by the activities of the organisation can be safely and quickly evacuated from our premises.

This policy will be used to ensure the provision of suitable and sufficient general fire precautions, assessment of risk and management of necessary fire safety arrangements.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the P&R Committee and the Strategic Development Director as the 'Responsible Person' for the organisation.

Signed: **Date:** 26/10/16

Simon Fitzpatrick

Strategic Development Director

2.   Introduction and Scope

2.1.   Fire can be a hazard in any of Blackwood's properties. Its consequences include the threat to the lives or health and safety of relevant persons, damage to or loss of property and severe disruption to normal everyday activities.

Managing the risk from fire demands fire safety precautions based on a combination of appropriate vigilance and protective measures depending upon building use and occupancy, the inherent fire risks and the legal obligations laid on Blackwood as an employer, occupier / owner landlord and of a 'Duty Holder".

2.2.   This fire safety policy applies to all premises, which are to any extent under the control of Blackwood as the employer, owner or principal occupier. Its requirements extend to all persons at those premises including staff, visitors and contractors whether permanently or temporarily engaged.

The extent to which these fire safety duties apply in respect of premises, or part of premises, depends on whether the premises, or part of the premises, are 'relevant premises' as defined in section 78 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. In most cases this will be a straightforward consideration, but in some cases the application may not be straightforward and may require interpretation and judgement. The Scottish Government has issued further guidance on this matter - Guidance on the Application of Fire Safety Law in Scotland.pdf

2.3.   Where premises are jointly occupied or Blackwood shares control of premises with other employers, then the arrangements for fire safety and maintenance will be coordinated, communicated and documented. In these premises the fire safety arrangements and procedures of the principal or host occupier shall apply or local variations agreed by all relevant parties and relevant persons.

2.4.   Blackwood will, so far as is reasonably practicable, and in accordance with the legal obligations detailed above;

- provide and maintain passive and active fire prevention, protection and measures according to the purpose or use of the building, the numbers of occupants and the activities or processes undertaken therein;

- provide comprehensible and relevant information to staff and others, through the provision and availability of emergency instructions or fire safety plans and the risks identified by relevant risk assessments;

- provide a programme of fire safety training for all staff;

- carry out and keep under annual review fire risk assessments, to analyse building and process fire risks, the existing preventive and protective measures and to identify areas for improvement;

- have in place a programme of works to improve or maintain the existing fire safety specifications;

- identify a sufficient number of persons or other methods, for initiating the fire evacuation procedure and provide information and assistance to the fire service;

- where appropriate, prepare and keep under review risk assessments in relation to the use, storage, handling, disposal and transportation of dangerous substances and ensure that, so far as is reasonable practicable, the risks associated with dangerous substances are reduced or controlled.

3   Practical Fire Safety Precautions

As part of a holistic fire safety management system, consideration of passive and active fire precautions is essential.

3.1   Passive Fire Precautions

3.1.1   Passive fire precautions are concerned with the physical conditions in premises, which are designed to facilitate containment of fire by design, construction and layout, effective communication and safe evacuation. In particular the:

- materials specification, design, construction and inspection of buildings, fire doors and escape routes taking into account the needs of customers, people with disabilities, contractors, the public, etc;

- appropriate safe and secure location of building services e.g. gas and electricity;

- provision of clear fire safety signage for escape routes and final exits in conformity with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996;

- provision of prominently located fire action notices (Visitor and Staff fire action notices) (e.g. by fire alarm manual break glass points) to inform people of the action to be taken in the event of fire; and

- education and training of staff in fire safety arrangements, in particular evacuation procedures and drills.

3.2   Active Fire Precautions

3.2.1   Active fire precautions are those features of the fire safety management system that detect and operate in the event of a fire,

including fire alarm systems, emergency lighting systems and fire fighting equipment. In particular

- the installation, maintenance, inspection and regular testing of fire alarms;

- the appropriate design, location, operation, monthly inspection and annual testing of adequate (emergency) lighting systems for fire escape routes;

- the provision, use, appropriate type and location, and annual maintenance of portable fire extinguishers.

3.3   **Blackwood Fire Safety Strategy**

3.3.1   Blackwood's fire safety strategy is based on the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and is detailed below;

The main strand of the fire safety strategy involves;

- appropriate management arrangements with effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of protective and preventative measures, including fire safety training;

- inclusive building design, alterations and commissioning including the provision of fire safety systems and maintenance;

- control of fire safety hazards, including the identification of those at risk;

- completion of annual fire risk assessments;

- ongoing monitoring, audit and review of all fire safety measures.

4   Planning

4.1   **Fire Risk Assessments**

4.1.1   Fire risk assessments are a requirement of the Fire Scotland Act 2005 and are a structured approach to determining the risk of fire occurring in premises or from a work activity, and identifying the precautions necessary to eliminate, reduce or manage the risk. The outcome of the risk assessment must be incorporated in the emergency fire evacuation plan.

4.1.2   Fire Risk Assessments must be carried out and reviewed periodically or when there is any significant building alteration or change of occupation and use of the premises. A review should also be undertaken following a fire incident/emergency, etc. If no change triggers a review, our care home fire risk assessments will be reviewed annually and all other fire risk assessments biennially. These risk assessments must only be undertaken by someone who is qualified and deemed competent to do so. Where these are undertaken by contractors the precise format of the assessments will vary, a general Basic Fire Risk Assessment Form can be used if needed for small premises/offices.

4.1.3   Risk evaluation and appropriate control measures to be taken into account will include those practical fire safety arrangements outlined above. The methodology adopted for remedial actions will be as detailed in the table below:

5 High (Intolerable)	Requires **Immediate Action**
4 Medium Risk(Substantial)	Requires action within **3 months**
3 Low Risk (Moderate)	Requires action within **6 months**

4.1.4   Risk assessments must take into account those who could be affected, e.g. numbers involved, their location, physical and mental capabilities and employees of organisations with whom a workplace is shared. The significant findings of the fire safety risk assessment will be made known to all other responsible persons as appropriate.

4.1.5   Where appropriate, an individual Personal Emergency Egress Plan (PEEP) must be developed for customers and staff who have known disabilities that will impact on their ability to evacuate the particular

premises. Account of regular visitors/contractors with disabilities should be included.

4.2 Emergency Fire Evacuation Plans

4.2.1 All relevant buildings that are controlled by Blackwood must have an emergency fire evacuation plan in order to ensure the timely evacuation in the event of a fire. The level of detail in these plans will vary depending on the type and physical size of the premises, the number of people present and the nature of any specific fire safety hazards, i.e. a care home will require a much more detailed plan than an open plan office.

4.2.2 All plans should, however include the following information:

- Purpose;

- action on Discovering a fire;

- warning of a fire (Details of how people become aware of a fire);

- calling the emergency services;

- evacuation procedures;

- power isolation (information needed by the fire service regarding shutting down of electricity and gas);

- place of assembly and roll call;

- liaison with the emergency services;

- identification of key escape routes;

- fire-fighting equipment;

- specific responsibilities;

- provision of information.

A simple map or diagram of the building should be included for ease of reference and include other relevant information such as details of firefighting equipment, location of emergency exits and manual break glass points. A larger version of this map or diagram is normally kept at the main fire alarm panel.

All personnel within the building should have access to this plan at all times.

4.3 Evacuation Arrangements for Disabled People

4.3.1 The safe and effective evacuation of disabled people needs careful thought. Procedures need to be in place, which takes account of the various scenarios that may arise. For example, the procedures adopted for people with a disability that are employed in a building will be different to those for person with a disability visiting the building.

4.3.2   There are two main types of evacuation strategy that can be adopted.

Immediate Evacuation - This is where residents/occupants are immediately evacuated from the building to a place of safety.

Progressive Horizontal Evacuation - This is where residents/occupants are moved from one 'fire compartment' into another that is not part of the initial evacuation zone. A 'fire compartment' is a part of a building separated from other parts of the same building by fire-resisting walls, ceilings, floors and doors of 30-60 minutes fire resisting construction.

In our care homes, a progressive horizontal evacuation strategy has been adopted and all staff are expected to play a role in the evacuation of residents, provided that, to do so, would not endanger life.

4.4   **Fire evacuation Exercises**

4.4.1   The purpose of these exercises is to educate staff in the correct manner of evacuating a building in the event of an emergency situation and to meet our legal obligations. Pre and post de-briefing sessions should accompany each evacuation drill. Fire evacuation of a building should be in accordance with established procedures as detailed in the premises emergency fire action plan.

3.4.2   Fire evacuation exercises shall be carried out at all 'relevant premises' twice per annum.

3.4.3   Fire evacuation exercises at our registered 'care homes' shall be carried out three times per annum. These exercises should also include provision to ensure that night shift staff has the opportunity to participate.

4.5   **Fire Safety Log Book**

4.5.1   To comply with legal requirements, a fire safety log book will be kept at all 'relevant premises'. The fire safety log book is to be used to record the details of all tests on passive and active preventative and protective measures, as well as records of all evacuation exercises including details of all false alarms. The typical contents of a fire log book can be found at Appendix B. The responsibility for the completion of this book will be allocated to the person with building fire safety responsibilities.

4.6   **Fire Safety Training**

4.6.1   Fire Safety Training is mandatory for all Blackwood staff, and shall form part of the staff induction process.

4.6.2   All staff shall receive as a minimum internal Fire Safety Awareness Training on an annual basis by e-learning. Additional training may be necessary for those with specific fire safety responsibilities, i.e. fire

marshals. The level of additional training required will be determined at a local level or as identified in the fire risk assessment.

4.6.3   For our Care Home staff e-learning on its own is not deemed sufficient, so as well as the annual internal training, they will also receive external (hands on) Fire Safety Training on an annual basis. This training will be staggered so that Care Home Staff receive some form of Fire Safety Awareness Training on a six monthly basis.

4.6.4   All fire safety training must be recorded in the fire safety log book and recorded in Blackwood's Learning Management System.

4.7   **Maintenance of Fire Safety Systems**

4.7.1   Maintenance of fire safety systems is the responsibility of Blackwood's Assets Department, who will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for the maintenance of all fire safety systems and equipment in compliance with the Fire Scotland Act 2005, Approved Codes of Practice and any other relevant legislation. Typical fire safety systems will include;

- fire detection and warning systems (bi-annually);
- emergency lighting (annually);
- fire-fighting appliances (annually);
- emergency routes and exits (annually);
- fire safety signs and notices (annually);
- premises fixed wire installation testing (5 yearly);
- gas safety inspection and testing (annually).

4.8   **Visitors and Contractors**

4.8.1   In many of our premises, visitors may be present on a regular basis. Other people, such as contractors, cleaners, etc. may be present on a regular, or ad-hoc basis. Any of these people could require assistance to evacuate the premises and they all need to be taken into account when defining emergency procedures and responsibilities.

4.8.2   Arrangements should be made to ensure that visitors are logged in and out of premises, using a visitors book or similar. The person hosting the visitor should ensure that they are made aware of fire evacuation procedures for the premises. In the event of a fire evacuation, the person hosting the visitor(s) is responsible for escorting them to the fire assembly point. There will be occasions where no one may be present to host/escort a visitor; in such cases alternative arrangements should be made to ensure that visitors are made aware of the fire safety arrangements for the premise (i.e. on the reverse of visitor badges, or in the sign in book).

4.8.3 Contractors should also be logged in and out of premises. Unless they are to be constantly supervised by staff or nominated personnel, they should also be given information about the site's fire evacuation procedures that they should then follow in the event of a fire evacuation.

5   Organisation and Control

5.1   Responsibilities

5.1.1 The responsibilities for maintaining fire safety lies with everybody. However, specific responsibilities for the implementation of this policy, fire safety, maintenance, emergency plans and staff training can be found in Appendix A and summarised below;

5.1.2 **Strategic Development Director** While the Board and the CEO have the responsibility for the health and safety of all employees, tenants, visitors and contractors, it is the Strategic Development Director who has responsibility for;

- ensuring that an appropriate system for carrying out fire risk assessments is in place;

- ensuring that any actions arising from fire risk assessments, are implemented;

- ensuring that this policy and/or any other fire safety policies/codes of practice that complement this policy are in place, properly implemented and reviewed.

5.1.3 **The Property Investment Manager** is responsible for;

- ensuring that all fire safety systems are properly maintained in accordance with the Fire Scotland Act 2005, Approved Codes of Practice and other relevant legislation

5.1.4   **The Organisational Health and Safety Advisor** is responsible for;

- preparing appropriate policies, procedures, and assisting in the preparation of local emergency fire action plans;

- ensuring that audit protocols are in place and reviewed on a regular basis;

- carrying out an annual H&S audit which will include fire safety.

5.1.5 **Line Management (i.e. Team Leaders/Local Managers/Care Service Managers)** are responsible for;

- ensuring that fire safety policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to;

- arranging fire emergency evacuations;

- ensuring that the fire log book is completed;

- providing to all staff information, instruction and training in fire safety;

- providing our customers with information on the fire safety measures to be taken or observed on the premises, including actions to be taken should a fire occur.

- where appropriate raise our customer's awareness of fire safety by arranging for the local authority fire service to attend their premises, in order to give fire safety talks/advice.

5.1.6   **Employees – are responsible for;**

- ensuring they are familiar with the emergency fire action plan for their workplace (i.e. the action to be taken on discovering a fire, how to raise the alarm and action on hearing a fire alarm);

- co–operate by participating in fire evacuation exercises;

- attending fire safety training when required;

- observing practical fire safety arrangements;

- reporting to their manager or supervisor any concerns they have about fire safety.

6   Monitoring Audit and Review

6.1   The following Key Performance Indicators will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the Fire Safety Policy;

- Number of fires recorded annually / number of fire related incidents;

- Achieving set schedules and time frames (fire evacuation drills);

- Measuring the number of Fire Service call outs against cause;

- Number and nature of enforcement, alterations or prohibition notices from statutory authorities.

6.2   An annual audit of all fire safety systems will be carried out by Blackwood's Organisational Health & Safety Advisor, to ascertain compliance with not only statutory provisions but with this Fire Safety Policy.

6.3   Reactive reviews will take place immediately following a fire safety event occurring.

6.4   A formal review will also be undertaken following a fire, changes to the premises construction and facilities, new procedures, new equipment, new materials and changes in staff numbers and roles.

Appendix A – Fire Safety Management Structure

Blackwood Fire Safety Management Structure	
The person with overall responsibility for fire safety **Planning:** Structure of the organisation **Organisation:** Setting objectives, policy and procedures **Control:** Identify person responsible for tasks/actions **Monitoring:** Implementation of standards **Review:** Review of fire safety performance standards	**Responsible Person** Simon Fitzpatrick **Position** Strategic Development Director
The person with responsibility for **fire safety risk assessments** • Carrying out fire safety risk assessments • Review of fire safety risk assessments	**Competent Person** Approved Fire Safety Contractor/Alex Brown **Position** Approved Fire Safety Contractor/H&S Advisor
The person with responsibility for the **maintenance programme** • Fire detection and warning system • Emergency lighting • Escape routes • Fire safety signs & notices • Fire resisting walls, partitions and doors • Firefighting facilities • Electrical appliances and premises installations	**Competent Person** Paul Bellamy **Position** Property & Investment Manager
The person with responsibility for **developing and reviewing the premises Emergency Fire Action Plan** which details the procedures to be taken by all staff, visitors, service users, contractors and all relevant persons in the event of a fire.	**Competent Person** Relevant Local Manager/Care Services Manager & Alex Brown **Position** Local Manager/Care Services Manager/ Health & Safety Advisor
The person with responsibility for **staff training** • What to do in the event of fire • What to do upon hearing the fire alarm • Liaison with the emergency services • Emergency shutdown procedures • Firefighting arrangements	**Competent Person** Local Manager **Position** Local Manager/Care Services Manager

Appendix B – Fire Log Book Index

1 | Useful Contacts
Visits from Scottish Fire & Rescue Service
Fire alarm details/ maintenance records

2 | Emergency fire action plan

3 | Locations of: Fire extinguishers
Break glass call points
Emergency lighting
Fire doors
Smoke/ Heat detectors

4 | Fire call point test records

5 | Fire extinguisher test records

6 | Emergency light test records

7 | Fire door checks

8 | Fire evacuation drill/ false alarm records

9 | Fire training records

10 | Fire risk assessment & action plans