



FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

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FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



DOCUMENTATION MASTER SHEET

Amendments to this Document are Detailed Below.

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
01	12/08/2019	This policy brings together previous separate fire safety and associated policies across Housing Services and PropertyCare	09/01/2020	LN	Tenant Panel
02	24/03/2021	Specify what falls under communal areas	24/03/2021	TJ	MH
03	06/09/2022	Minor updates i.e., job descriptions etc	06/09/2022	TJ	MH
04	25/01/2023	Update to timescales of FRAs and remedial works following Fire Safety Audit 2022 and move over to new policy template	17/05/2023	TJ	MH
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FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



OVERALL AIM/INTRODUCTION

The overall aim of Fire Safety and Prevention Policy is to provide assurance to our tenants and key stakeholders on our management of fire safety including key areas such as testing and maintenance of equipment, fire prevention measures and advice when fire occurs.

The policy sets out who is responsible for Fire Safety within GCH and outlines the various areas where responsibility has been delegated to ensure suitable operational management.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to property owned or managed by GCH. The information applies to all GCH staff or contractors involved in Fire Safety and the management of GCH buildings. The policy also sets out the responsibilities of GCH residents under the terms of their tenancy agreement and the advice GCH provide regarding Fire Safety

The policy outlines GCHs approach to a number of key areas including:

1. Statutory Compliance & Regulatory Expectations
2. Fire Risk Assessment
3. Fire Safety Equipment
4. Stay Put & Evacuation Policies
5. General Advice to Residents Regarding Fire Safety
6. Enforcement of Tenancy Agreements
7. Partnership Work
8. Consultation
9. Training
10. Policy Review

DEFINITIONS

Fire safety “is the set of practices intended to reduce the destruction caused by fire. Fire safety measures include those that are intended to prevent ignition of an uncontrolled fire, and those that are used to limit the development and effects of a fire after it starts.”

Fire prevention “is a function of many fire departments. The goal of fire prevention is to educate the public to take precautions to prevent potentially harmful fires and be educated about surviving them. It is a proactive method of reducing emergencies and the damage caused by them.”

1. FIRE SAFETY; STATUTORY COMPLIANCE AND REGULATORY EXPECTATIONS

The approach to tenancy fire safety and best practice in terms of fire prevention is directly linked to the robust process that GCH has put in place to adhere to its landlord statutory compliance responsibilities. This includes;

- A knowledge of our buildings and the fire protection in place
- A programme of regular Fire Risk Assessments conducted by an external practitioner.
- A regular programme of testing, servicing and maintaining fire equipment.
- The development of our partnership with Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service as specialists in respect of Fire Safety & Compliance and Fire Prevention

When a property is designed and constructed, Building Regulations make requirements in respect of various fire safety measures. However, there is no ongoing control for the maintenance of these measures under Building Regulations; the regulations have no further effect until there are proposals for alterations. After a property is occupied, control of fire safety is transferred to the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

A brief summary of these regulations is given below to inform the following policy.

Building Regulations 2010 Part B:

This document defines the general requirements for fire safety in newly constructed properties.

The Housing Act 2004:

The Housing Act 2004 makes requirements regarding the condition of a broad spectrum of housing, including both individual flats within a block and the common parts of that block (i.e., all parts of buildings to which this policy applies). Local housing authorities are the enforcing authority for this legislation.

Assessment of the conditions within flats or the common parts of blocks of flats is carried out by means of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System ('HHSRS') specified in the Act. The purpose of the HHSRS is to provide a means of assessment that identifies hazards and allows a judgement to be made as to whether the consequent risk to people is acceptable. A total of 29 hazards, including the hazard of fire, must be considered in carrying out the HHSRS.

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005:

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the 'FSO') does not apply to individual flats but does apply to the common parts of blocks of flats. The FSO also applies to workplaces within a block of flats. For example, these can include a room used by a caretaker or concierge, a plant room or commercial premises, such as a in sheltered housing.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



The FSO imposes a general duty of fire safety care in respect of 'relevant persons. This includes anyone lawfully on the premises. The duty is primarily to ensure that the fire safety measures within the common parts, plant rooms, and so forth are such as may reasonably be required in the circumstances of the case to ensure that the premises are safe. (If any part of the block is a workplace, the fire safety measures must, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the safety of the employees.)

The fire safety measures within the common parts, that must be adequate for compliance with the FSO, comprise the following:

- Measures to reduce the risk of fire and the risk of spread of fire.
- The means of escape from fire.
- The measures necessary to assist people in the use of the escape routes, such as emergency escape lighting, fire exit signs and measures for smoke control. (Some of these measures may not be necessary in all buildings: for example, where escape routes are straightforward, easily identifiable and likely to be well-known to occupants, fire exit signs will normally be unnecessary.)
- Where necessary, fire extinguishing appliances. (These are not normally necessary within common parts, but might be necessary within a plant room, caretaker's office or other non-domestic parts of the block.)
- Any fire alarm system necessary to ensure the safety of occupants. (Normally, a fire alarm system within the common parts is not necessary or appropriate.)
- An emergency plans. (In a small block of flats, this may be as simple as a fire action notice, but it is important that the procedure to adopt in the event of fire is disseminated to all residents.)

The FSO requires that the appropriate fire safety measures are determined by means of a fire risk assessment. The fire risk assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient' to ensure that the general duty of fire safety care is satisfied within the common parts.

This fire risk assessment does not address the safety of residents from fire within their own flat.

GCH may need to refer to or consider the following legislation when addressing tenant fire safety and prevention.

- Housing Act 1988
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO)
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health & Safety Rating System
- ASB Crime & Policing Act 2014

2. RISK ASSESSMENT

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



GCH will provide a risk assessment of all communal areas of domestic blocks/sheltered scheme and will review these risk assessments based on the recommendations provided within the most recent assessment. We will also review the risk assessment of any building which has undergone material alterations which may affect the fire safety of the building.

The risk assessment will:

- Determine the extent to which fire safety arrangements in premises are adequate and whether GCH comply with the relevant fire safety legislation.
- Identify failures to comply with the specific legislation, particularly those that may lead to the commission of an offence.
- Within the action plan of the fire risk assessment, write a sufficient outline requirement for any measures required to achieve compliance with the relevant legislation.
- Meet the requirements of the PAS79 (2012).
- Make recommendations on the suitability of fire safety measures.
- Comment on the recommended frequency of future risk assessments.

It is the responsibility of the GCH Compliance Manager to ensure that the Fire Risk Assessment Register is kept up to date. This includes the below duties:

- Issuing new risk assessment / risk assessment review request to the contractor for completion
- Updating the register with completed Risk Assessments and the next due date
- Adding recommendations to the Risk Assessment Register including target dates
- Issuing recommendations to the relevant parties for completion
- Monitoring completion of actions and reporting any non-compliance via the compliance meeting or directly to the Head of Asset Management & The Director of Asset Management.

3. FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

The following table identifies the minimum level of fire safety equipment and detectors GCH will install in our tenant's homes. We may vary the level of detectors or equipment based on a risk assessment undertaken to identify specific risks within property types.

HOMES		
Type	Standard Detection	Grade
Single household occupancy including flats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interlinked mains smoke detectors incorporating a battery back-up installed on each floor covering escape routes.	Grade D: LD3

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interlinked mains operated Heat Detector with battery back up in Kitchen and other high-risk areas. • Mains operated CO detector installed in any 'living space' where solid fuel is used. 	
Flat/House within a Sheltered Housing Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interlinked mains smoke detectors incorporating a battery back-up installed on each floor covering escape routes. • Interlinked mains operated Heat Detector with battery back up in Kitchen and other high-risk areas. • Mains operated CO detector installed in any 'living space' where solid fuel is used. • Tunstall Life Link unit allowing the activation of smoke and heat detectors to be monitored via a call centre and directed to either the Specialist Housing Manager or the Fire Brigade. 	Grade D: LD3

COMMUNAL AREAS		
Dwelling Type	Standard Detection	Grade
Communal Area of block of flats	<p>We will not fit an alarm as standard into the communal areas of blocks of flats, however we will ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All flats will be fitted with alarms as per the above specification. • Walls of communal areas to be painted with Class 0 paint to control the spread of flame. • Emergency Lighting to be installed in communal areas. • Fire signage highlighting exit routes and fire action notices. • FD30s doors to be fitted to flat entrance doors to control fire & smoke spread into the communal area. • Risk assessment to be completed every 1-3 years dependant on the level of fire risk. The risk level has been broken down into three categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High risk: FRA to be undertaken every 12 - 18 months (CAT1) 	NA

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medium risk: FRA to be undertaken every 18 - 24 months (CAT2) ○ Low risk: FRA to be undertaken every 24 - 36 months (CAT3) ● Remedial actions highlighted by the fire assessor will be recorded on the fire risk assessment with the following risk levels against them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Priority 1 – High Risk – 1 week ○ Priority 2 – Medium Risk – 1 month ○ Priority 3 – Low Risk – 3 months 	
Blocks with specific risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have a number of blocks which have specific risks (for example longer exit routes, a larger number of dwellings or a higher proportion of vulnerable residents) and in some cases we will install a higher grade of automated detection than detailed above. This will be based on risk as specified by a specialist contractor. 	Where alarms are fitted in communal areas, they will comply with BS5839-1. Category L2

Testing of Fire Safety Equipment

In order to ensure that the equipment installed within our buildings is operating as intended, we will undertake a range of tests to the equipment and detectors. These tests are outlined below:

EQUIPMENT	TEST	FREQUENCY	RESPONSIBILITY
Smoke, CO, Heat Alarms in domestic properties	Check alarm is functioning and that it is interconnected to other alarms in property	Annual	Property Care Engineer
Tunstall Units	Check unit is activated by smoke and heat alarms and that it connects to call centre	Annual Annual	Property Care Engineer Specialist Housing Manager
Dry Risers	Annual Wet Test & Annual Dry Test	Annual	Fire Safety Contractor
Emergency Lights	3 Hour battery check test Monthly switch over check	Annual Monthly	PropertyCare Electrician PropertyCare Electrician

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



Fire Panels	Full test	Six monthly	Fire Safety Contractor
Sounders, Beacons, call points	Full Test	Six monthly	Fire Safety Contractor
	Weekly Call Point check	Weekly	Fire Safety Contractor and Specialist Housing Manager
Alarm checks on Sheltered Schemes and Homeless Accommodation	Check alarm is functioning and connects to Hereford call centre	Weekly	Specialist Housing Manager
Fire Equipment including blankets and extinguishers	Full Test	Annual	Fire Safety Contractor
Risk assessment of non-domestic areas	Non-intrusive risk assessment of communal area	1-3 years based on risk	Fire Safety Contractor
Sprinkler System	Full Test	Annual	Fire Safety Contractor
Lightning Protection System	Full Test	Annual	Fire Safety Contractor

Audit and Review

The testing schedules will be monitored by the GCH Compliance Manager within the Asset Management Team. Completion of work against the various schedules will also be reported on a monthly basis via the GCH Compliance Matrix and Compliance Meeting. Any missed or delayed tests will be highlighted and raised with the relevant manager.

4. STAY-PUT AND EVACUATION POLICIES

We will apply different policies to differing types of accommodation as identified in the table below, based on the latest guidance from the National Fire Chiefs Council and our Fire Risk Assessors. Residents will be provided with specific advice relating to their block and the policy GCH currently apply to it. The table below details the type of policy applied to the type of property.

A full list of blocks, HMO's and Sheltered Accommodation and the current Policy applied to them can be found within the GCH Fire Risk Assessment Register.

DWELLING TYPE	POLICY
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FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



Purpose built non-Sheltered Housing	Stay Put
Sheltered Schemes	Stay Put
Homeless Accommodation including HMO	Simultaneous Evacuation
Converted Blocks of Flats (not purpose built)	Assessed on a case-by-case basis
General Needs dwellings	Simultaneous Evacuation

The below table outlines advice given to residents based on the policy type which applies to their block.

ADVICE TO RESIDENTS REGARDING STAY PUT POLICY	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in your home and close all doors behind you. Move towards a window, so that you can be seen from the outside. Get ready to be evacuated e.g., get dressed, collect walking sticks, house keys etc. Wait for the Senior Fire Officer to decide when to evacuate the building. They will have a list of all the residents who need help. If you are in a communal area leave by the safest route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the lift – as these will not work while the fire alarm is sounding. Let visitors through the communal door entry system unless they are emergency personnel needing to get into the building. Leave your home until told that it is safe to do so. Go out into the corridors to investigate. Block corridors, keep escape routes clear at all times.

ADVICE TO RESIDENTS REGARDING SIMULTANEOUS EVACUATION	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a fire alarm sounds or you identify a fire, exit your home by the safest route, beyond the building If you are in a communal area of a block, leave by the safest route Call the Fire Service to notify them of the fire. <p>NB: You should familiarise yourself with the layout of the building and ensure that you understand exit routes and safe locations beyond the building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you live in a block, do not use the lift – as these will not work while the fire alarm is sounding. If you live in a block, do not let visitors through the communal door entry system unless they are emergency personnel needing to get into the building.

5. GENERAL ADVISE TO RESIDENTS REGARDING FIRE SAFETY

The below general advice is given to residents regarding fire safety.

FIRE SAFETY IN THE HOME
Top tips
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Never smoke in bed or whilst lying down, always smoke when alert and if possible, outside.2. Never leave cooking unattended or leave anything on top of your cooker.3. Take care with your clothing as loose sleeves and long clothing easily catch fire when cooking or near heaters.4. Keep your exit routes and main walkways clear.5. Do not use chip pans, use a deep fat fryer.6. Extinguish candles safely before going to bed and use appropriate holders. Do not place them on top of your TV.7. Keep all heating sources clear of clutter and take care near heaters.8. Close your bedroom door whilst sleeping to prevent a fire spreading.9. Never leave items on charge overnight or for lengthy periods.10. Plug-in air fresheners can present a risk of fire and it is recommended that you do not use them.11. Always keep your cooker and extractor fan clean.12. Keep secondary exits in your home clear of furniture.13. We actively discourage the use of polystyrene tiles in our homes because older types of these tiles can give off poisonous fumes if they catch fire and may spread fire quickly to other parts of the property.14. Ensure that your furniture has fire safety labels.

FIRE SAFETY IN COMMUNAL AREAS
Top Tips
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Keep all communal areas clear and free from rubbish or hazards at all times.2. Keep communal staircases, under stair cupboards, landings and corridors free from rubbish or hazards at all times. They provide access for emergency services in the event of a fire and an escape route for the safe evacuation of residents.
Communal Areas: General Advice
Items left in stairwells or corridors could become a hazard particularly in the event of a fire if the area were smoke filled or in darkness.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



Residents living in blocks of flats with communal areas have a responsibility to keep the corridors, landing, stairwells and under stair cupboards clear at all times. These are not areas for storage of personal items, furniture or bags of rubbish awaiting disposal.

As an illustration the following items should not be stored or placed in communal areas;

- Bikes or motor bikes
- Prams, buggies or pushchairs
- Children's toys, bikes and scooters
- Recycling boxes, bags or bins
- Furniture, tables, cupboards or chairs
- Door mats or carpet
- Black bin bags and general rubbish
- Mobility scooters or other walking aids

For additional information on mobility scooters please refer to the GCH Mobility Scooter Policy. Besides causing an obstruction, the storage and battery charging of mobility scooters within communal corridors creates an additional fire loading within designated escape routes. Mobility scooters are manufactured from plastic and rubber-based materials, which liberate vast quantities of thick black toxic smoke when involved in fire.

GCH will routinely inspect communal areas and remove all items from the common parts, with the costs recharged to individual residents if known or reconciled as part of the annual service charge for residents within the building/block. GCH also encourage residents to help us keep areas clear by reporting items left in communal areas.

All residents should ensure that communal doors and fire doors to individual flats are not wedged open and kept closed at all times.

Legislation from July 2007 prohibits smoking in common parts of domestic premises e.g., communal areas in a block. Enclosed communal areas of blocks of flats are now designated smoke-free premises. Although E-cigarette use, known as vaping, is not covered under the legislation, we will prohibit use of vaping in common parts of domestic premises e.g., communal areas in a block.

Our priority is to ensure that communal areas are hazard free and together with residents within our blocks of flats and housing schemes, we effectively manage, monitor and minimise fire risk.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

Fire Safety in your home is very important and we want you to be safe from the risk of fire in your home. If you can smell or see smoke, call 999 immediately.

SMOKE ALARMS AND FIRE DETECTION

The best way to protect yourself from fire is to have a smoke alarm – it will give you early warning of a fire in your home.

Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dust your smoke alarm regularly. • Check your smoke alarm weekly to make sure it is working by pressing the test button. • Replace the battery if the alarm bleeps for any reason other than smoke or fire in your home. • Contact us if you have any problems with your smoke alarm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove a working battery from your smoke alarm. • Paint over or remove the smoke alarm.

INSTALLING EXTRA SMOKE ALARMS

Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with us first to ensure your ceiling does not contain asbestos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put smoke alarms in or near kitchens or bathrooms because everyday steam and smoke can set them off by accident. If you live in a Sheltered Housing Unit, your Scheme Officer will also test the fire alarm systems in your scheme's communal areas weekly. •

HOW TO PREVENT COMMON KITCHEN FIRES

Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep matches and saucepan handles out of children's reach and do not let saucepan handles stick out from the cooker where they could be easily knocked off, • Take the pans off the heat or turn down the heat under the pans if you have to leave the kitchen whilst cooking. • Keep tea towels and cloths away from the cooker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave children in the kitchen on their own when you are cooking. • Wear loose clothing when cooking as it could easily catch fire. • Put anything metal in the microwave Take any risks, if oil in a pan catches fire, turn off the heat if it is safe to do so. • Try to put an oil pan fire out with water as it could just lead to the burning oil exploding over you and the kitchen.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use spark devices rather than matches or lighters to light gas cookers because they do not have a naked flame. • Double check the cooker is off when you have finished cooking. • Keep electrical leads and appliances away from water. • Keep toasters clean and away from curtains and kitchen rolls. • Keep your cooker clean and free from fat and grease. • Use a thermostat controlled electric deep-fat fryer, which cannot overheat rather than hot oil in a saucepan which can easily overheat and catch fire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a burning saucepan outside as oxygen will feed the fire and make it worse.
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HOW TO PREVENT COMMON ELECTRICAL FIRES	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always check that you use the right fuse to prevent your plug overheating Make sure your electrical appliances have the British or European safety mark. • Use one plug per socket rather than using adaptors or extension leads. High powered appliances such as washing machines should always have a single plug and plug socket to themselves. • Keep electrical appliances clean and in good working order to prevent them causing a fire. • Look for signs of dangerous or loose wiring such as scorch marks, hot plugs and sockets, flickering lights, fuses that blow or circuit breakers that trip for no obvious reason. • Replace any old cables and leads Unplug appliances that you are not using. • Unplug electric blankets before going to bed if they do not have a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overload an extension lead or adaptor – check its limit e.g., an extension’s limit may be 13 amp so you would not want to put 4 x 5-amp appliances, as this adds up to 20 amps. • Leave electric blankets folded as these damages the internal wiring, store them flat or rolled up instead. • Buy second hand electric blankets. •

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

<p>thermostatic control for safe all-night use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to secure portable heaters up against a wall to stop them falling over. • Keep portable heaters away from curtains and furniture and never use them for drying clothes. • Replace electric blankets immediately if they show wear and tear. 	
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DO NOT TACKLE THE FIRE YOURSELF!!	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep calm and leave immediately, closing all doors behind you. • Crawl out at ground level if smoke is making it difficult for you to breathe – smoke tends to rise, and breathing should be easier the closer you are to the ground. • Check doors before opening them, with the back of your hand. If it is warm, do not open it – there may be a fire on the other side. • Raise the alarm by activating a fire alarm point there is one. Alternatively dial 999, ask for the Fire and Rescue Service and tell them your location. • Go to a place of safety outside and stay there until told what to do by the Senior Fire Officer on the scene. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste time investigating what has happened or rescuing valuables.

IF YOU ARE TRAPPED BY THE FIRE	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take refuge in a room with a window or external door that isn't affected by fire or smoke and make sure you close the door behind you to delay the fire. If you can, place a wet piece of clothing or towel across the bottom of the door to prevent smoke getting in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Not Jump - If there are 2 adults, 1 should go down first to catch children. The other should get into a secure position and then lower the children as far as possible down the outside wall before letting them drop.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is an exit door or window from the room, use it to escape. If you are on the first floor, throw something out of the window which will help to break your fall, such as a mattress or cushions, and then lower yourself by your arms from the window ledge before dropping. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are above first-floor level, or due to your age or health cannot get out of the window, open the window and draw attention to yourself by shouting and by waving sheets or clothes. Wait until the emergency services arrive to rescue you
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IF YOUR CLOTHES CATCH FIRE	
Stop! Drop! And Roll!	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lie down and roll around. It makes it harder for the fire to spread and may put out some of the flames. Smother the flames with a heavy material, like a coat or blanket, it will help deprive the fire of oxygen which it needs to keep burning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run around, it will make the flames worse.

Priority Fire Risk & Safety Advice

CHIP PAN FIRE	
<p>The most common type of fire is caused by deep fat frying. There are 1000s of people injured in these kinds of fires each year. The oil can not only cause terrible burns, but it can go up in flames.</p> <p>At high temperatures an open chip pan provides an ideal fuel for a fire which is difficult to put out. Chip Pans can cause a fireball when left unattended or when heated to extremely high temperatures</p>	
Do	Do not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider using a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer. Use the safest way to deep fry with a thermostat controlled electric deep fat fryer. Its thermostat stops it from ever overheating. Not take unnecessary risks by using an open Chip pan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use chip pans.

BARBECUE
<p>Barbecues present a significant fire risk and a risk to personal safety. Balconies on blocks of flats may seem an ideal place to relax during the summer but under no</p>

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

circumstances should they be used for barbecues due to the risk of falling embers, compounded by stronger wind speeds at height.

While barbecues should never be used on balconies on blocks of flats, they can be used safely in outdoor garden areas, provided these safety procedures are observed.

Top tips:

- Ensure the barbecue is strong, sturdy and in good working order.
- Place it on level ground to avoid it tipping over.
- Keep it well clear of any trees, shrubs, or flammable objects.
- Keep children and animals well away.
- Never pour on petrol or other accelerants
- For charcoal barbecues, only use the minimum fuel necessary.
- For gas barbecues, ensure the tap is turned off before changing the cylinder.
- Never leave the barbecue unattended
- Keep a bucket of water or sand close by
- Ensure the barbecue is cool before attempting to move it

CANDLES

Candles in the home are now getting a more and more popular way to add relaxation to our homes, which has seen a large increase in the number of candle related incidents. Candles mark special occasions and create a special atmosphere. They also bring fire into your home. So, treat them carefully.

Do

- Always put candles on a heat resistant surface. Be especially careful with night lights and tea lights, which get hot enough to melt plastic. TVs are not fire-resistant objects.
- Put them in a proper holder. Candles need to be held firmly upright by the holder, so they won't fall over. The holder needs to be stable too, so it won't fall over either.
- Position them away from curtains. Don't put candles near curtains or other fabrics – or furniture. And keep them out of draughts.
- Use a snuffer or a spoon to put them out. It's safer than blowing them, which can send sparks and hot wax flying.

Do not

- Don't put them under shelves. It's easy to forget that there's a lot of heat above a burning candle. If you put it under a shelf or other surface, then it can burn the surface. Make sure there's at least three feet (one metre) between a candle and any surface above it.
- Keep clothes and hair away. If there's any chance you could lean across a candle and forget it's there, put it somewhere else. You don't want to set fire to your clothes or your hair.
- Keep children and pets away. Candles should be out of reach of children and pets.
- Keep candles apart. Leave at least four inches (10cm) between two burning candles.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double check they're out. Candles that have been put out can go on smouldering and start a fire. Make sure they're completely out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care with votive or scented candles. These kinds of candles turn to liquid to release their fragrance, so put them in a glass or metal holder. • Don't move them when they're burning. Extinguish candles before moving them. Also, don't let anything fall into the hot wax like match sticks. • Don't leave them burning. Extinguish candles before you leave a room. Never go to sleep with a candle still burning. • Never leave a burning candle or oil burner in a child's bedroom
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Flexibility

The Fire Safety and Prevention Policy allows for the flexibility to consider a range of advice to promote safety and preventative measures. Whilst these fire safety tools are largely generic it enables GCH to work with individuals and households to decide on the appropriate type of support and intervention in accordance with the customer's specific needs and circumstances.

The use of this flexibility will ensure that those customers who need and are willing to engage will receive help and support to harness tenancy sustainment, with the aim of building safe and cohesive communities.

Tenancy Sustainment

GCH is committed to promoting tenancy sustainment and to supporting sustainable communities.

Tenancy sustainment refers to a customer's ability to successfully manage a tenancy independently or with tailored support. In terms of tenancy compliance, a customer would need to demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities in respect of fire safety and prevention.

6. HOW WE WILL ENFORCE BREACHES OF TENANCY RELATING TO FIRE SAFETY

It is our primary objective to seek to provide support to customers in addressing identified behaviour and lifestyle which could present a fire risk. In this way enforcement action will

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



usually be taken as a last result, where other options and engagement with the customer have proved unsuccessful in resolving the issue or mitigating the risk.

Where a customer is not willing to engage with support or there is no discernible improvement, we will consider tenancy enforcement.

The appropriate enforcement intervention will also be considered for reported fire risk or hoarding cases where access to the property is repeatedly denied for monitoring visits.

GCH acknowledges that there are no 'one size fits all' solutions and the legal intervention may include either an Injunction or Possession proceedings (or both).

Injunction:

- This intervention can be considered where there is an immediate and high fire risk
- For an injunction the customer must have capacity to understand the terms of the injunction.
- An injunction is a useful tool if it is thought that the customer is capable for controlling the behavior and complying with the terms of the Injunction. An injunction may include:
 - o Prohibiting certain conduct
 - o Requiring certain steps
 - o Imposing positive obligations

Possession:

- GCH will only consider possession when all other options have been exhausted.
- For this type of intervention GCH will consider the impact and vulnerability of the customer, alongside reasonableness and proportionality of bringing a claim for possession.

For customers who are subject to possession proceedings resulting in eviction they will also be advised what actions and changes they need to put in place in order that they can be considered for housing with GCH in the future.

7. PARTNERSHIP

We work in partnership with the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service to ensure customers on request or subject to an identified risk, receive a Safe & Well home visit. The overall objective is to promote fire safety awareness and reduce the level of risk of domestic fires.

The partnership approach may include;

- Targeted Safe & Well visits by the Fire Service to customers based on identified risk factors.

FIRE SAFETY AND PREVENTION POLICY



- Safe & well visits by the Fire Service based on customer requests, referrals or enquiries.
- Joint home visits with the Fire Service for fire risk assessment purposes e.g., Hoarding cases.
- Fire safety awareness training for GCH front line staffing teams.
- Fire safety and awareness campaigns to educate GCH customers on fire safety prevention.

8. CONSULTATION

GCH will consult and review this Policy with Tenant Panel and link in with other relevant agencies in order to continually develop good practice in this policy area. We will routinely consult with the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Services as local Fire Safety experts and encourage partnership working to support our approach and strengthen our advice to customers.

9. TRAINING

The Responsible Person, any Deputies and other key personnel will be identified and provided with specialist training and regular refresher training, which will be recorded on their personal training record.

10. REVIEW

This policy will normally be reviewed biennially to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, unless an earlier review is required due to regulatory, statutory, or other requirements.