



Committee Approver	BOARD
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Classification	Policy (sitting as an appendix to H&S Policy)
Title	Fire Safety Policy
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Revised by	Director of Assets Head of Assets Head of Housing Procurement & Compliance Team Leader Housing Team Leaders Health & Safety Advisor
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Related Documents	Health & Safety Policy Electricity and Electrical Safety Policy, Gas and Carbon Monoxide Safety Policy, Smoke Free Policy Staff Fire Safety procedures, Landlord Fire Safety Procedures, Care Home Fires Safety Procedures. Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) Agreement
Location of Electronic Copy	V:\Policies and Procedures Shared\Policies\Health & Safety

1. Policy Statement

Viewpoint places a high importance on ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all employees, customers, contractors, visitors and members of the public.

As an employer, a Landlord, and a provider of care, fire safety forms an essential part of this commitment and is of vital importance in ensuring the health and safety not just of our customers, but also, those who live in the immediate area, work in or visit our properties.

Viewpoint are committed to providing robust processes and procedures to meet this responsibility and minimise the risks associated with poor fire safety management, namely, fire, explosion, threat to lives or health and safety of relevant persons, and damage to or loss of property.

Compliance with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, wider legislation and current best practice means that our fire safety responsibilities extend into a much wider role. Viewpoint will seek to foster a positive attitude amongst customers and staff towards fire safety and its importance in preventing incidents.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy, and the procedures and documentation which supports it, is to clearly outline the arrangements for fire safety at Viewpoint in line with all legal and regulatory obligations and best practice guidance.

It is recognised Viewpoint will have different fire safety arrangements dependent upon the area of business and the premises under consideration. We understand there will be necessary differences in approach relevant to our role as a landlord, employer or provider of care.

This policy will act as the overarching policy document, and will outline our approach to fire safety management in all areas. The relevant business area's fire safety management procedure, fire action plans, and other relevant documents sitting under this policy will provide the individual detail and together will form Viewpoint's overall fire safety management system.

This policy will ensure:

- The role of Dutyholder and any appointed competent persons are clearly defined. Where there is third party involvement, the arrangements for fire safety will be coordinated, communicated and documented.
- There are robust fire safety management arrangements in place to allow fire safety matters to be appropriately addressed, planned, monitored and reviewed.

- Viewpoint provides and maintains adequate fire safety systems to minimise risk according to the purpose or use of the building, number of occupants and the activities or processes undertaken therein. Fire prevention is prioritised.
- Viewpoint complies with the Healthy, Safe and Secure elements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Viewpoint will meet the requirements of the statutory tolerable standard and the SHQS.
- A programme of Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) is undertaken upon all Viewpoint’s relevant premises.
- Fire action plans, including the fire evacuation procedure, are clearly documented for all relevant property types and made available to all relevant persons. The FRA will inform the content of the fire action plan and the resultant evacuation procedure.
- Within our housing stock, where appropriate, and as required, a person centred fire safety risk assessment (PCFSRA) will be carried out. The landlord fire safety management procedure will outline the process to be followed.
- Within our care homes, and within our housing stock, where appropriate, and as required, an individual personal emergency egress plan (PEEP) will be developed for any person with vulnerabilities that will impact on their ability to evacuate the premises. This information will be made available to the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) as required. The relevant business area’s fire safety management procedure will outline the process to be followed.
- All premises require a documented fire evacuation procedure to ensure timely evacuation as and when required. For housing stock, an evacuation procedure will be documented regardless of whether a stay-put policy is recommended for the premises. This allows for scenarios such as when users of the premises are in common areas when the fire alarm sounds.
- Fire evacuation drills will be carried out on certain premises and buildings, as required, at scheduled intervals. This includes within our head office and care homes, as detailed in the relevant business area’s fire safety management procedure. The purpose of these exercises is to educate staff in the correct manner of evacuating the building in an emergency. Pre and post briefing sessions will accompany each fire evacuation drill.
- Fire evacuation drills are not carried out in Viewpoint housing stock. Only the flat of fire origin needs to be evacuated, at least initially. Widespread evacuation of our mainstream, alarmed, sheltered and

enhanced sheltered housing stock is not formally required in-line with our current fire risk assessments.

- All fire safety systems and equipment are subject to a routine inspection, test and maintenance programme which meets requirements of all relevant legislation and codes of practice. The relevant business area's fire safety management procedure will outline full requirements.
- Robust processes are in place to ensure contractors and sub-contractors engaged to carry out work on fire safety systems and equipment are suitably qualified and competent.
- A fire safety log book will be held on all relevant premises. The log book will record the programme of routine inspection, testing and maintenance of all the fire safety features and equipment contained within the premises. The fire safety log book will also contain a copy of the fire action plan and will signpost to the fire risk assessment and records of training. The fire safety log book will be kept up to date, and made accessible to the SFRS, and relevant others, upon request.
- Robust processes are in place to ensure contractors and sub-contractors engaged to carry out any work on Viewpoint premises have the appropriate level of fire safety awareness training to ensure work undertaken is completed safely, in a timely manner and does not undermine fire safety measures.
- Suitable arrangements and precautions are in place to ensure the safe management of building, alteration and remedial work.
- There are adequate, suitable and safe systems in place to ensure that work equipment is procured, tested and maintained so that it presents the lowest possible potential for causing fire. All equipment will be used as per manufacturers' instructions, regularly inspected and tested, where required.
- There are adequate, suitable and safe housekeeping rules in place in all Viewpoint premises for the safe storage of all materials, including chemicals and dangerous substances.
- Common areas will be kept clear of fire hazards and of any items which would impede evacuation. The benefits of keeping common areas clear - in reducing fire risk and allowing clear access for users of the premises and emergency services - will be promoted to staff and customers.
- Within our housing stock there is a zero tolerance approach toward keeping items in common areas, other than those furnishings provided by Viewpoint. Robust processes are in place to support and enforce this approach. We will remove any items which are considered to be an immediate fire risk or trip hazard without notice. Where tenants persist

in breaching the zero tolerance approach, then appropriate legal action will be pursued.

- In all residential properties where furniture is provided, whether in common areas or as part of a furnished tenancy, furniture will be fire retardant in compliance with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988 and subsequent amendments.
- Fire safety training is mandatory for all Viewpoint employees and forms part of the induction process and ongoing refresher training. Viewpoint will provide suitable and sufficient information, training and supervision to ensure our employees are competent to carry out their duties, are aware of fire safety risks and have access to all relevant fire safety documentation and information. Required training is documented in the relevant business area's fire safety management procedure.
- Contractors, customers, and relevant others are given suitable and sufficient information and instruction on fire safety through provision of emergency instruction and relevant fire safety documentation.
- Tenants allocated Viewpoint housing stock are required to sign a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) agreement. Page 9 of the SST states *"No property belonging to you or anyone residing with you or anyone visiting you, including bicycles, motorised bicycles, motorised buggies, motorcycles or prams, should be stored in any common parts except in the areas set aside for storage. You must not do anything which causes inconvenience or danger including blocking or restricting of movement in common areas and fire escape routes to anyone using the common parts"*.
- Within Housing, the tenant handbook outlines Viewpoint's responsibilities for fire safety as the landlord, and the tenant's responsibilities and is issued to all new tenants at sign-up. The sign-up pack includes a fire safety leaflet. In addition, restrictions upon storage and use of certain fire hazards are outlined in the tenancy agreement and Good Neighbour Agreement. Viewpoint will issue regular fire safety information to remind tenants of their responsibilities.
- Arrangements are in place to log visitors and contractors in and out of certain premises and buildings, as required. The processes are detailed in the relevant business area's fire safety action plan.
- Visitor logs are not in place in our mainstream, alarmed, sheltered and enhanced sheltered housing stock. Widespread evacuation of these tenancies is not formally required, in-line with our current fire risk assessments.
- Contractor logs will allow information about the site's fire evacuation procedures to be shared with contractors when they log in to site.

- The SFRS may, at times, inspect our premises to confirm compliance or enforce legislation if necessary. There are clear processes in place to liaise with the SFRS, manage any actions arising, and to communicate and record any enforcement correspondence.
- The SFRS have introduced a reduced response to unwanted fire alarm signals within commercial buildings. All Viewpoint premises with a fire alarm system installed are sleeping risk premises, therefore the SFRS will continue to respond to these alarms.
- Any facilities, equipment and devices under Viewpoint control, provided for the use by or protection of fire fighters are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are kept in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs)

The legal requirements relating to Fire Risk Assessing are complex and are often taken to exclude domestic premises. However, Viewpoint has a legal duty to risk assess all areas defined as ‘workplaces’. Furthermore, the fire regulations require common areas to be maintained in a certain condition suitable for the Fire Service, which can often only be ensured by carrying out a risk assessment. The relevant business area’s fire safety management procedure will clearly set-out which of our premises are a ‘relevant premises’ and require a FRA.

- The FRAs undertake an organised and methodical assessment focusing upon the safety of all ‘relevant persons’ in case of fire, helping identify risks that can be removed or reduced and deciding upon the nature and extent of the general fire precautions required to protect people against the fire risks that remain.
- All FRAs are subject to regular scheduled review dependent upon the use of the premises. FRAs carried out in our three care homes are subject to an annual review, with housing stock and other premises undergoing a tri-annual review.
- FRAs will also be reviewed after significant change to the fabric of the building or introduction of new combustible material and after a fire emergency.
- We will retain written records of the risk assessment for at least five years or until one year after a new assessment has been completed and any fire precautions put in place to address the risks identified.
- Robust processes are in place to ensure fire risk assessors are suitably qualified & competent to undertake FRAs on Viewpoint properties.

- Actions arising from FRAs are scheduled and completed within appropriate timescales. Completion will be monitored and any non-conformance escalated. All FRA remedial actions will be progressed to completion and accurate records maintained. When a new FRA is completed the database will be updated accordingly.

Monitoring and Auditing

- A formal process of auditing and monitoring the fire safety management system, including fire safety systems is established and maintained, with properly defined reporting, escalation and action procedures.
- Fire safety will be actively considered when setting annual objectives and key performance indicators.
- Formal reviews will take place immediately following a fire safety event occurring or any changes to the premises or staff levels.

3. Legislation/related policies

The following information is not an exhaustive list of legislation and guidance. Instead, it is a reference point, signposting to those pieces of legislation and guidance that are most relevant to this policy.

- 3.1. Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- 3.2. Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, as amended
- 3.3. Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
- 3.4. Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- 3.5. The Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- 3.6. Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended
- 3.7. The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
- 3.8. Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988
- 3.9. Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- 3.10. BS 5839-6:2013
- 3.11. Practical fire safety for existing specialised housing and similar premises: guidance. January 2020. ISBN: 978-1-83960-510-9. Practical Fire Safety for Existing Specialised Housing and Similar Premises: Practical Guidance. February 2022. ISBN: 978-1-80201-938-4 (Scottish Government).
- 3.12. Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Existing High-Rise Domestic Buildings: guidance updated March 2021. ISBN: 978-1-80004-877-5 (Scottish Government)

4. Scope

Under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, Viewpoint as the Dutyholder, has responsibility for relevant premises as identified in the act.

This policy applies to:

- 4.1. Viewpoint employees, tenants, residents, contractors and other persons or stakeholders who may work on, visit or use its premises or who may be affected by its activities and services.
- 4.2. Viewpoint's duty to complete FRAs upon all of Viewpoint's premises which are 'relevant premises' as defined in section 78 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. This includes the duty to complete FRAs upon our workplaces and care homes.
- 4.3. Viewpoint's responsibility for properties which are owned and managed by Viewpoint.
 - 4.3.1. Where Viewpoint own properties which are managed by a third party, Viewpoint retains ultimate responsibility for fire safety, unless specified otherwise in the lease or management agreement. The same standards as outlined in this policy will apply. Viewpoint will continue to have responsibilities to ensure that the fire safety measures taken for the property are meeting all legislative requirements.
 - 4.3.2. Where Viewpoint is the landlord in a block of flats with other flat owners, Viewpoint and the other flat owners will be jointly responsible for common areas.
 - 4.3.3. Where Viewpoint acts as a Property Factor, responsibility is set out in the written statement of services.
 - 4.3.4. For shared ownership arrangements, responsibility is set out in the repairs responsibility document. As a shared owner, Viewpoint retains responsibilities as a dutyholder.
 - 4.3.5. Where Viewpoint premises are used as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), they will be licensed under the Housing Scotland Act. Full requirements for HMOs is detailed in the relevant business area's fire safety procedure.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

A full outline of all roles and responsibilities for named individuals with accountability for any aspect of fire safety is within the relevant business area's Fire Safety Procedures.

Under legislation, the employer (if a workplace), or if no employer, the legal person who has control of the premises (either the occupier or owner of the premises) for the purpose of a business or undertaking is ultimately responsible for fire safety. In law, they are known as the 'Duty holder' and, within Viewpoint, this is the corporate entity itself.

At Viewpoint the Dutyholder duties are delegated to the Director of Assets who is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, meeting statutory requirements and delivering our fire safety commitments. Performance of the 'Duty holder' duties may be delegated to the Head of Assets.

Board

The role of Viewpoint's Board is to ensure that this policy, as well as any associated policies and procedures, are regularly reviewed, as required, or in accordance with the usual cycle of policy review.

The Board will, in fulfilling its function, ensure that it complies as necessary with this policy, and the associated policies, procedures and documentation which support it.

Executive and Leadership Teams

The role of the Executive and Leadership Teams is responsibility for ensuring that this policy, and the associated policies, procedures and documentation which support it, are implemented within Viewpoint.

The Executive and Leadership Teams shall ensure that fire safety management systems and processes are in place, and that they are operated properly from day-to-day. The Executive and Leadership Teams shall also ensure that relevant managers and team members familiarise themselves with this policy, and the associated policies, procedures and documentation which support it, as well as undertaking any associated training.

The Director of Assets is the named Dutyholder for fire safety.

Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they familiarise themselves with this policy, and the associated policies, procedures and documentation which support it, as well as undertaking any associated training.

All staff with specific fire safety responsibilities should understand the significance and importance of their role and ensure all processes outlined within the Fire safety policy and procedure are robustly followed.

All staff should look out for fire hazards as a part of their routine duties and visits to residents' homes. Any concerns must be reported immediately to line managers or to the Head of Assets.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years unless a material change in the prevailing legislation necessitates an earlier review.