



THE FAIRHAZEL CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED

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Fire Safety Policy (Communal Areas)

Effective Date: June 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Fairhazel Co-operative Limited considers the safety of its residents as extremely important and takes its moral and legal obligations and responsibilities very seriously.

Recent fire risk assessments undertaken for the Co-op have identified inappropriate storage of various items and materials in communal areas as a significant risk.

Following the Grenfell fire tragedy in June 2017, this policy is revised to ensure that all fire risks in common areas are alleviated. The aim of the policy is to increase members' knowledge of 'fire awareness' and raise members' sense of responsibility.

Definition of a communal area: Any area that is not within the confines of the tenant's flat. Such areas may include corridors, stairways and landings, cellars and the entrance to the building as well as external pathways and gardens.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 Evacuation Emergency Plans

Fire Emergency Plans will be sent to residents living in a Fairhazel Co-operative flat and will also be displayed on the Fairhazel Co-op notice boards where applicable. All new tenants will be provided with a copy of the Fire Emergency Plan when they sign up for a flat.

2.2 Fire Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments will be carried out by a duly qualified and competent person (external consultancy) for all properties owned by the Fairhazel Co-operative on a periodic basis where there are communal areas.

2.3 Fire Safety Improvement Plans

Improvement actions identified by the risk assessments will be incorporated into a fire safety improvement plan, and actioned by the responsible persons. This is usually the Maintenance Officer and the Building & Works Working Party.

2.4 Communal Areas

The communal areas within general needs buildings relate to walk ways / landings / staircases, cellars and outside communal areas including pathways etc.

To enable the consistent management of all our communal areas, the Fairhazel Co-operative will adopt a policy in so much as no personal possessions or unwanted goods will be permitted within escape routes and other parts of communal areas.



All parts of the communal areas must always be kept free from all obstructions at all times, in order to comply with fire and safety regulations, as it is a primary means of escape from the building in case of a fire or other emergency.

No items are permitted to be stored in stairways or landings, as this could block someone's escape route in the event of a fire.

In light of the Grenfell fire tragedy, the Government have requested that Landlords now adopt a "zero tolerance approach" when managing common areas. This is to ensure that all communal areas are kept clear and free of personal and/or unwanted items; even when these may be out of their neighbour's way and not necessarily an obstruction.

As a simple rule, if items are residents' personal belongings, they must be kept in their personal space inside their flat.

2.5 Communal Areas Inspections

As part of the Fairhazel Co-operative's commitment to Fire Safety within our communal areas, the Fairhazel Co-operative will ensure that all communal areas are inspected on a regular basis, i.e. monthly as a minimum. Any issues identified during the inspection will be actioned within reasonable timescales, recorded and monitored.

2.6 Prevention

Wherever possible, the Fairhazel Co-operative will aim to prevent fire safety issues by raising awareness amongst its residents from the beginning of their tenancies, and ensuring that support, advice and assistance is readily available.

At sign up, all new tenants will receive a Fire Emergency Plan leaflet and briefed on fire safety measures and fire safety related conditions of tenancy of their new home.

2.7 Alterations to Property Doors

Residents are not permitted to change the front door to a flat or any of its features without Fairhazel Co-operative's written permission. Residents who replace or make changes to their front door, with a door or features below the standard of a fire resistant door, will be advised to change it back to its original state or be recharged for the cost of its replacement.

2.8 Policy Communication

The Fairhazel Co-operative's approach is to ensure that residents understand the policy and that it is applied in a fair and consistent manner to all residents. Tenants will be provided with access to the literature on the Fire Safety Policy via the Fairhazel Co-operative's website, advertised in the Fairhazel magazine.

2.9 Policy Enforcement



The Fairhazel Co-operative recognises that unfortunately there may be some residents who will choose to disregard this policy. In such circumstances every effort will be made to discuss the policy with the resident so compliance is achieved before action is taken, e.g. removing articles from the communal areas.

2.10 Good Practice Guidance

The Fairhazel Co-operative has based its policy on the The Local Government (LG) Group on fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats. This was after landlords articulated a number of concerns about how best they can deliver an appropriate level of fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats.

LG Group has worked alongside local authorities, private sector landlords and management agents, housing and environmental health professionals and fire and rescue services to produce this guidance.

Additionally, this policy has been revised in light of the Grenfell fire tragedy in June 2017 when the Government requested that Landlords now adopt a “zero tolerance approach”.

3. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The Fairhazel Co-operative will strive to make early contact with residents when a fire safety issue arises, and where possible will talk it through with them to promote a firm but fair approach.

Where there are specific needs, such as mental health, then the Fairhazel Co-operative will seek to work with support agencies and/or family members to resolve any issues. Where there are disabilities issues, such as the use of mobility scooter storage, then the Fairhazel Co-operative will work with individuals and/or families to resolve the safety issues first and foremost, with the view to find long-term solutions which are practically reasonable and satisfy both parties if possible.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Management Committee, having formerly adopted the Fire Safety (Communal Areas) Policy for the Fairhazel Co-operative, accepts the overall responsibility for its implementation and for monitoring its effectiveness.

The Chair of the Building & Works Working Party (BWWP) will be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy including the fire risk assessments and their outcomes, and for delegating responsibilities to both the Maintenance Officer and the Housing Manager to ensure appropriate measures are taken and any necessary actions are completed.

5. CONSULTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

The Chair of BWWP will ensure that this policy continues to be developed and improved through discussions and consultation with members in the BWWP, as well as other working parties and committees where appropriate including Gardens & Grounds Sub-Committee, Rules Working Party and the Management Committee. All tenants of the Fairhazel Co-operative will be notified of any significant changes to the policy that may affect them.

