

BELGRAVE NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-OPERATIVE HOUSING ASSOCIATION HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Aims of the health and safety policy

The following are aims of the health and safety policy:

- To ensure the maintenance of a safe and healthy environment for co-op members and service provider staff members, providing appropriate operational processes and safe systems of work covering all the co-op's activities
- To ensure appropriate levels of safety for others affected by the co-op's activities (visitors, contractors and others)
- To ensure compliance with relevant health and safety legislation
- To ensure risk assessments are carried out where there is a legal duty to do so and that they are reviewed on a regular basis and actions shown to be necessary are implemented
- To ensure that arrangements are made for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventive and protective measures.

Delegated Authority

- 1 The co-op recognises that the committee carries the responsibility for the co-op's health and safety policy, but the operation of the policy and associated decision making is delegated to the Senior Property and Compliance Lead, reporting to the Chief Executive Officer on any significant actions needed in relation to the policy.
- 2 The committee will consider any items raised by the Senior Property and Compliance Officer in relation to health and safety and individual committee members will comply with any health and safety determinations given by the Senior Property and Compliance Officer in relation to their implementing this health and safety policy.

Ensuring safety

- 3 There are various health and safety features the co-op needs to take responsibility for in relation to its buildings and its offices. The co-op identifies, recognises and accepts responsibility for meeting all

statutory requirements that provide for health and safety of tenants in their homes.

Health and Safety at work

- 4 The co-op will fulfil the requirements of health and safety legislation and regulations in relation to health and safety at work.
- 5 The co-op expects the Senior Property and Compliance Lead to ensure that any repairs or other contractor provides and complies with a health and safety policy in carrying out their roles in the co-op. Ensuring receipt of a contractor's Health and Safety Policy will be a standard part of the procurement process for contractors.
- 6 The co-op expects the Senior Property and Compliance Lead to give assurance to the committee that health and safety risk assessments have been carried out where there is a need to do so and appropriate risk management strategies put in place.
- 7 The co-op particularly expects the Senior Property and Compliance Lead to give assurance regarding health and safety requirements relating to the use of the co-op's offices. The committee commits to comply with any health and safety recommendations made by the Senior Property and Compliance Lead in respect of the co-op offices.
- 8 The Senior Property and Compliance Lead will report annually to the committee on health and safety compliance.

Fire safety

- 9 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the Fire Safety Order) requires any organisation that has some level of control of non-domestic premises - that includes common parts of blocks of flats - to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and to make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire.
- 10 The Fire Safety Order does not apply to individual flats in a block or house. In practice a risk assessment of common areas may need to take into account individual flats opening into that area and in particular the door dividing the flat from the common area.

11 To comply with the Fire Safety Order, the co-op will:

- have Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) carried out by someone competent to do them of all relevant properties to identify fire risks and plan action to manage them
- implement measures (particularly those recommended in FRAs) to reduce or remove the risk of fire on the premises and the risk of the spread of fire within the premises
- make arrangements to provide safe and effective detection and warning arrangements and safe and effective means of escape. The co-op will not provide fire fighting equipment. Any electrical installations will be checked and maintained on an annual basis.
- provide appropriate information relating to fire safety for all members, including information about what to do in the event of a fire and about fire prevention
- ensure that any committee member, staff member or contractor who might be working on relevant properties are provided with appropriate instruction, training and supervision to enable them to maintain fire safety standards.

12 Frequent periodic checks will be carried out (and records relating to checks kept) of affected properties in relation to the following and potentially other issues that might have a bearing on fire safety:

- ensuring fire doors are in good condition and are not wedged open
- ensuring all access and emergency exits are kept clear at all times. The co-op has adopted *zero tolerance* of items left in communal hallways and the co-op will take action to remove items left in communal areas if this is the case.
- ensuring there are no obvious fire hazards such as combustible material

- checking that there is no damage to fire protection equipment such as smoke ventilation shafts and windows, emergency lighting, signage, alarms etc.
 - checking all relevant electrical or dry riser cupboards are shut and secured
 - checking the status of fire panels and automatic fire detection and smoke venting systems and raising urgent and non-urgent repairs where necessary
 - testing alarm systems (a periodic check will be made of any electrical systems by an NICEIC registered electrician)
 - assessing the potential for arson within the property and its curtilage.
- 13 The co-op will communicate an evacuation strategy to all members living in flats. The evacuation strategy may be that residents should:
- *stay put* in the event of a fire if the co-op is confident that there is sufficient compartmentation between flats and the communal areas
 - exit the building if it is clear that it is safe to do so.
- 14 Escape routes identified will be:
- suitable for the numbers of people likely to use them
 - easily, safely and immediately openable at all times
 - have appropriate escape route fire signage
 - usable without passing through doors requiring a removable key or code to unlock
 - free from any obstructions, slip or trip hazards
 - well-lit by normal or emergency escape lighting
 - available for access by the emergency services.
- 15 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be developed for any member who needs help to escape.
- 16 The co-op will ensure that any contractors who work on its properties understand health and safety measures and the need for

compartmentation between properties. The co-op will monitor compartmentation between properties following any works carried out.

- 17 Where the co-op owns or manages properties over 11 metres, buildings converted into flats, flats that are in the same buildings as commercial premises, and other types of flats, it should obtain advice specific to the properties.

Gas, electricity and water safety

- 18 The co-op will ensure that all gas systems and equipment are properly installed and serviced annually by Gas Safe registered organisations.
- 19 Electrical installations will be periodically inspected and tested dependent on the nature of the installation and industry best practice. Repairs to electrical installations will be carried out by suitably qualified contractors.
- 20 The co-op may own homes or buildings where water storage and distribution present a water safety risk (this is unlikely to be in new or recent build homes but may be in older homes and in converted properties). Where necessary risk assessments should be carried out on water systems by a suitable external contractor and control measures recommended should be implemented.
- 21 It is a legal requirement to consider the risks from legionella that may affect residents, staff or members of the public and take suitable precautions.

Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs)

- 22 **Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs)** – older buildings owned or managed by the co-op may contain ACMs. The co-op will arrange asbestos management surveys of all buildings constructed before 2000. Dependent on findings of surveys, ACMs will be managed by leaving them in situ and informing volunteers, staff and contractors of their locations and monitoring their condition. Where the only safe option is removal, they need to be removed by a licensed contractor.

- 23 Assessment of domestic premises will be carried out prior to any invasive work to identify where sampling and analysis will be needed to identify the presence of ACMs. Results will be provided to contractors who will be working on the property. Where ACMs are suspected in the part of the building where works are to be carried out, sampling and analysis of suspect materials will be arranged, and where this indicates that the work would disturb ACMs, a suitable contractor will be engaged to carry out the work.
- 24 The co-op will maintain an asbestos register of any properties containing ACMs.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

- 25 Where the co-op, or staff or contractors working for it, use hazardous substances, such as cleaning products, printer inks and toners or weedkillers, the co-op will ensure that records are kept of substances used, their storage, their risks and what steps are taken to mitigate risks.

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

- 26 The co-op may have responsibilities in relation to CDM regulations which place a health and safety responsibility on the co-op as *the client* – an organisation for whom a construction project is carried out. Construction is defined in CDM 2015 as the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting out, commissioning, renovation, repair, upkeep, redecoration or other maintenance, de-commissioning, demolition or dismantling of a structure.
- 27 The client's duties include making various suitable arrangements to ensure health and safety of personnel. This will usually be ensured through the employment of appropriately skilled and qualified contractors, but the co-op still retains responsibility. The co-op is required to notify the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) where construction work is scheduled to last longer than 30 working days and have more than 20 workers on site at any point and/or where construction work is scheduled to exceed 500 person days.

Potential risks to be avoided

- The co-op is not in compliance with health and safety legislation or regulations. The consequences for members and staff in the event of death or injury as a result of not doing something that should be done can be severe.
- The committee considers that it is delegating health and safety risks that are its responsibilities to staff or contractors.