

# Electrical Safety Policy

## 2023/24

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Bury Housing Services treats the health and safety of tenants, staff, contractors and other users of the properties it owns and manages as well as its buildings of paramount importance.

In fulfilling these health and safety obligations, Bury Housing Services is committed to mitigating the risks posed by the use of electrical systems within buildings it owns and manages. The risks include:

- Electrical shock
- Electrical burn
- Fires of electrical origin
- Electric arcing
- Explosion initiated or caused by electricity
- Electrical fire
- Death or serious injury

This Policy sets out Bury Housing Services' responsibilities to comply with the relevant legislation and regulatory guidance on the installation, inspection, repairs, testing and certification of electrical systems in buildings it owns and controls including:

- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IEE) Wiring Regulations 18<sup>th</sup> Edition, BS 7671(2018)
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Electrical equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016
- The Consumer Protection Act 1987 & 2015
- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Housing Act 2004
- IET Wiring Regulation 18<sup>th</sup> Edition: BS 7671:2018 Requirements
- The Building Regulations of England and Wales in particular, – Approved Document P – Electrical safety in dwellings

Application of the Policy also enables Bury Housing Services to meet the requirements of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing adopted by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) as follows:

- Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes

## Access and Communication

Bury Housing Services is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to everyone. Bury Housing Services will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers, perceived or real may exist, that may make it difficult for people to work for Bury Housing Services or use its services.

## Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

Bury Housing Services is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favorably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Transgender, Sexual Orientation, Religion and/or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity.

Bury Housing Services will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation. Bury Housing Services will ensure its employees and others with whom it works, will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).

This Policy must be read in conjunction with Bury Housing Services’:

- Health and Safety Policy
- No Access Policy and Procedure

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## Statement of Intent

Bury Housing Services will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements in meeting its responsibilities to ensure electrical safety in buildings it owns or manages.

To meet the above requirements Bury Housing Services will operate a resourced and comprehensive electrical safety management system including checking and certification of all electrical systems and equipment that Bury Housing Services is responsible for.

Bury Housing Services will ensure that internal electrical staff as well as any contractors it employs to carry out checks on its electrical systems are ‘Authorised Competent Persons’ who have the appropriate and up to date qualifications i.e. Technical Qualification in Electrical Engineering, City & Guilds 236 parts 1 and 2 or NVQ3 equivalent, City & Guilds 2381 or 2382 18<sup>th</sup> edition ‘wiring regulations’, City & Guilds 2391 or equivalent for testing and inspection and 2.3 PAT 2377, where required.

Bury Housing Services will keep accurate records of all periodic checks undertaken on:

No	Type of Installation	Frequency of inspection and testing
1	Portable Appliance Testing in offices and work location	12 months
2	Portable Appliance Testing in furnished tenancies of domestic properties	12 months
3	Fixed wiring systems in domestic properties	At change of tenancy / 10 years

4	Fixed wiring systems in communal areas of purpose build blocks of flats	5 years
5	Fixed wiring systems within shops and other commercial properties	5 Years
6	Fixed wiring systems within Sheltered / Extra Care Schemes	3 years
7	New electrical installations in domestic properties	10 years
8	Emergency Lighting systems in communal areas of purpose-built blocks of flats and Sheltered / Extra Care Housing schemes	1 year
9	Fire Alarm systems within Sheltered / Extra Care Housing schemes and where fitted within the general housing stock	1 year
10	Lighting conductors	1 year
11	Street Lighting installations located on Bury Housing Services land (unadopted by Bury Council)	6 years

Bury Housing Services is not legally obliged to provide as a matter of course Domestic Electrical Installation Condition Reports to tenants (undertaken on all domestic properties and when they are undergoing void works in between lettings) but will, however, provide copies on request.

Bury Housing Services will adopt a 'fair but firm' approach to gaining access to domestic properties where periodical electrical testing is required. This will include:

- Writing to tenants in advance of the required access date and providing an initial appointment (which can be altered on request) providing a minimum of 24 hours' notice and ideally 5 working days in advance of the appointment.
- Partnership work with external agencies and advocacy groups where tenants are known to be vulnerable for any reason
- Providing text reminders where contact mobile phone numbers are known.
- A series of escalation letters and interventions as defined in the No Access Policy and Procedure

Where possible combining appointments with other safety checks e.g. annual landlords gas safety checks, where applicable

The process of dealing with the 'No Access' situation will be as set out within Bury Housing Services' No Access Policy and Procedure.

## 3 Policy

### Landlord Responsibilities

Bury Housing Services will use Repairs Direct to discharge their duties for promoting electrical safety in domestic properties as set out in the clauses below:

Bury Housing Services will carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report (EICR) on all void properties by a qualified electrician, ensuring all electrical systems and any supplied equipment is safe for use before making the property available for re-letting. Information from these reports and other aggregated property condition information will also be used to inform future investment works including scheduled re-wiring of properties.

Copies of the Electrical Inspection Condition Reports will be retained by Bury Housing Services as proof of the fitness for purpose of electrical systems at the time of letting. (See Appendix 1 – Electrical Installation Condition Report)

Bury Housing Services will also carry out an Electrical Inspection Condition Report when there is a transfer of tenancy from one party to another (mutual exchanges) but there is no vacant void period (this will not apply when there is a transfer from a single to a joint or joint to a single tenancy).

As a minimum specification, Bury Housing Services will ensure that domestic properties, at the time of letting:

- Have an electrical system that is safe for continued use
- Keep supplied appliances to a minimum
- Ensure that where supplied appliances are provided, safety warnings are attached including CE Marked and/or approved
- Ensure that where appliances are provided, flexes are in good order and properly attached to appliances and plugs
- Ensure working smoke and heat alarms are present and in working order
- Ensure a working CO detector is present in rooms with gas appliances fitted and in working order
- Ensure that earth tags are in place
- Ensure that where appliances are provided, plugs are of an approved type, CE marked and have a sleeved live, and neutral pins
- Ensure that plugs provided, and sockets conform to BS1363 or BS1363/A for heavy duty uses
- Ensure that all fuses in appliances provided are of the correct type and rating
- Make sure that tenants have access to the main consumer unit, fuses and isolator switch and that each device is clearly labelled or a schedule provided
- Keep a record of all fuse ratings
- Report any defects to the DNO regarding equipment such as utility fuses, incoming service cables and ensure the defects are resolved before re-let

Bury Housing Services will endeavour to carry out a periodic check of fixed wiring systems within domestic properties every 10 years. Bury Housing Services will rely on the goodwill and co-operation of tenants to gain access when requested to carry out these checks.

Where access is denied, Bury Housing Services may consider the use of legal powers within the tenancy agreement to secure access, if operatives working on behalf of Bury Housing Services consider there to be a significant risk to the occupants or the property by not carrying out the electrical check.

Each case will be assessed on its merits and any final decision to instigate legal action to gain access will be made by the Neighbourhood Services Manager or Sheltered / Extra Care scheme Manager.

If a property is suspected to be abandoned, Bury Housing Services will deal with it in line with its suspected Abandoned Procedure.

Where Bury Housing Services carry out works to electrical systems in domestic properties that will be classed as 'new installations', 'additional' or an 'alteration' e.g. where a complete rewire is required or a new consumer unit is installed, it will ensure Electrical Installation Certificates (EIC's) or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWC's) are issued and retained.

Where Bury Housing Services has installed new electrical systems (i.e. a complete rewire) in domestic properties, it will carry out periodic electrical testing after 10 years as per due date provided on the Electrical Installation Certificate or at change of occupancy (whichever comes first), and thereafter, every 10 years from the last date of inspection. This period may be shorter dependant on the condition of the electrical installation at the time of inspection.

Bury Housing Services will conduct a scheduled fixed wiring test of all electrical systems in communal parts of domestic accommodation it owns and manages once every 3 years. Any systems designed to ensure fire safety within buildings such as fire alarms and emergency lighting will be subject to more frequent testing in line with regular routine system testing in accordance with British Standards requirements.

Where Bury Housing Services supplies electrical equipment, either for use in communal areas or as part of furnished tenancies, Portable Appliance Testing will also be conducted every twelve months and Bury Housing Services will ensure appropriate labelling is clearly displayed.

In order to comply with the British Standards BSEN 62305, Bury Housing Services will inspect, test and certify all lightning conductors installed on buildings it owns or controls, every twelve months.

### **Tenant's Responsibilities**

Bury Housing Services tenants have a responsibility to use electrical devices/ appliances and the electrical systems supplied to properties responsibly to protect the health and safety of themselves and others.

Bury Housing Services encourage tenants to maintain good electrical safety around the home by regularly checking the visual condition of devices and appliances for signs of wear and tear that could potentially be dangerous e.g. scorching, loose wires or cable grips (more detailed information is available via the Health and Safety Executive website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)). Where any doubt exists over the safety of equipment, tenants are advised to switch the appliance / device off, disconnect from the mains and seek the advice of a qualified electrician.

Where tenants discover a problem with Bury Housing Services owned or supplied electrical systems or equipment, they should inform Bury Housing Services by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 0161 686 8000 immediately.

As part of its service standard developed and reviewed in consultation with customers on annual basis, Bury Housing Services operate the following response times for dealing with responsive repairs to electrical systems:

- Bury Housing Services will endeavour to respond to emergency repairs within 24 hours and within 2 hours if there is risk to health and safety in order to make it safe if not repairable
- It should be noted, however, that due to the mechanical nature of the systems in operation, it may not always be possible to remedy a fault immediately e.g. where manufactured parts are required.

- In these circumstances Bury Housing Services will endeavour to resolve issues as expediently as is possible, keeping users of the system informed of expected timescales to restore to full working order
- Bury Housing Services will respond to non-emergency repairs within 10 working days of the date of the notification subject to availability of specialist parts

Bury Housing Services tenants have a responsibility not to tamper with any electrical systems supplied as part of their tenancy including common parts and should follow Bury Housing Services' 'Request to Alter' procedures for any changes required to the system (this will involve contacting the Customer Contact Centre and requesting an alteration, which will normally be the subject of an inspection before a decision is taken to grant or refuse permission).

Any electrical installation undertaken on behalf of the tenant shall be carried out by a Part P approved installer, Bury Housing Services shall check the credentials of the installer as part of the decision-making process

Where tenants carry out property alterations and improvements, which include additions / alterations to the electrics, they should seek authorisation prior to any works being undertaken.

If works are approved, tenants are responsible for ensuring appropriate safety checks are carried out and all relevant certificates are supplied following the works/installation as set out in the Tenancy Agreement. Tenants are also responsible for meeting the cost of this.

### **Contractor's Responsibilities**

All appointed electrical contractors shall be registered with the NICEIC, ECA, NAPIT or other accredited body and shall be registered under a recognised Domestic Installer Self-certification Scheme in compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations.

When undertaking any electrical installation works, the contractor will also be required to conform in full with the requirements of this policy.

### **Leaseholder and Shared ownership responsibilities**

Typically, these groups do not fall directly under our responsibility for ensuring electrical safety, as the responsibility for this remains with the leaseholder or shared owner. The importance of electrical safety will be communicated regularly and publicised at every opportunity.

Any defective or unauthorised works needing rectification may incur a recharge. If any installation has been undertaken without our permission, and is found to be defective, the supply may be terminated.

### **Bury Housing Services' Responsibilities as an Employer**

Bury Housing Services will ensure the safety of its employees from electrical dangers in office locations, by ensuring that Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is carried out on all portable electrical equipment, every 12 months.

Portable Appliance Testing will also be carried out on a rolling twelve-month schedule for any equipment that is used away from the office, including cordless chargers and mains operated tools, machinery and devices.

Bury Housing Services will also as part of general health and safety training for all staff provide information on the safe use of electrical equipment in and around office locations including the safe storage of cabling, avoidance of trip hazards and dangers posed by liquid spills around electrical equipment and systems.

The frequency of re-inspection for non-residential assets will be planned by the Facilities Team in accordance with the relevant guidelines. However, on recommendation of the 'appointed' electrical testing contractor this may be revised after taking into consideration a number of factors such as, use, operations and condition of the installation.

### **Key Responsibilities of Staff:**

Job profiles are available for all members of staff. The key responsibilities for electrical safety is highlighted below:

**Chief Executive** – Overall responsibility for ensuring physical and financial resources are provided to ensure the required safe systems of works can be implemented

**Director of Assets** – To ensure policies and procedures are documented for the required safe systems of work within the Assets Directorate

**Business Manager Repairs Direct** – to ensure only qualified and competent electricians are engaged to carry out work to electrical systems and to ensure qualifications and competencies are reviewed formally on an annual basis

**Business Manager Sustainability and Investment** – responsible for identifying the investment needs of the housing stock in relation to electrical systems and components

**Principal Duty Holder** (Bury Housing Services Electrical Co-ordinator) – to plan, supervise, check and be accountable for the quality of electrical work undertaken including the on-going validation of the electrician training and qualifications. Ensuring Approved Electrical Contractor Accreditation is in place with NICIEC for all areas of electrical inspection, Testing, Installation and Repair works carried out by Bury Housing Services.

The additional responsibilities of the PDH as defined by NICIEC are:

- Ensuring that the business carries out work in accordance with the relevant standards, including the issue of appropriate certificates or inspection reports for all electrical work carried out
- Ensuring that the business undertakes the work activity in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements
- Ensuring that any persons undertaking electrical work receive any necessary training
- Ensuring that all electrical work is assigned to the business' QS(s) and ensuring sufficient QS's are employed to effectively manage and supervise electrical work
- Ensuring that where a QS ceases to be employed in that capacity, the PDH shall notify NICEIC within 30 days

**New Works Co-ordinator** - to plan, supervise, check and be accountable for the quality of electrical work undertaken by electrical contractors undertaking electrical works on the capital investment programme



including the on-going validation of the electricians training and qualification records as well as quality control checks on in-progress and completed electrical works. Ensuring Approved Electrical Contractor Accreditation is in place with NICIEC for all areas of electrical inspection, Testing, Installation and Repair works carried out by Bury Housing Services or an electrical contractor under their direct supervision.

**Asset Management Co-ordinator** – to ensure the electrical testing regimes and replacement of electrical components is included within the capital investment programme including the necessary certification of completed works.

**Electrical Technical Advisor** - To produce and publish the specifications and methods of installation for electrical works that are to be undertaken by contractors working in the Bury Housing Services owned and managed properties, this is to ensure consistency and standardisation and the correct methods of working. Specifications are updated regularly to promote, safety, continuous improvement and a high level of workmanship from electrical contractors.

**Qualified Supervisor (QS) / Electrical Co-ordinator / Technical Advisor Facilities Management**– to verify and validate the quality and compliance of the day-to-day work of the business.

- Ensuring results of the verification process are accurately recorded on the appropriate certificates or inspection report
- Undertaking supervisory duties of employed persons to ensure they are competent and/or are adequately supervised
- Having adequate knowledge, experience and understanding of the design, construction, maintenance, verification and/or inspection and testing procedures for electrical work
- Having adequate knowledge of applicable Building Regulations and Standards where relevant

The responsibilities of the QS should be clearly stated by the PDH and consideration should be given to stating these responsibilities in writing.

The level of supervision necessary for electrical work undertaken by the business will be determined by the level of competence of each operative with regard to the risks involved in the work they are being instructed to undertake.

Where the risks involved are low, verbal instructions are likely to be adequate but as the risk or complexity increase there is a point where the need for written procedures become important to ensure that instructions may be understood and supervised more rigorously.

In this context, supervision does not necessarily require continual attendance at the work site but the degree of supervision and the manner in which it is exercised is for the PDH and QS to arrange to ensure that danger, or injury, is prevented.

**Level 1 Operatives** - would be Instructed persons (electrically) who would generally be apprentices, labourers, electrician's mates or electrical improvers - and who under the supervision of a Skilled person (electrically), could be able to install wiring systems. Others that fall within this category are career changers who may have training and/or qualifications but lack experience.

**Level 2 Operatives** - would be Instructed persons (electrically) who are experienced, trusted electrical installers who can carry out electrical installation work efficiently and in accordance with the current BS 7671 and Building Regulations/Standards.

Therefore, they can be expected mostly to work without the need of close and detailed supervision.

**Level 3 Operatives** - would be considered as Skilled persons (electrically) who possess practical, theoretical and electrical engineering skills, experience and knowledge with adequate technical supervisory experience comparable to that of QS.

## 4 Implementation

All staff have a responsibility to be aware of the Bury Housing Services' Periodical Electrical Testing Policy to be able to direct any customer queries that may arise. Staff also need to be aware of the Policy to fulfil their health and safety duties, *"to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do"*.

The Facilities Team in liaison with the 'appointed' electrical testing contractor will be responsible for determining the schedule of checking for fixed wiring in office, other work location and plant / machinery.

## 5 Performance

The number of properties which have exceeded the 10 year period for re-inspection and testing will be recorded and reviewed monthly as part of the key performance reporting arrangements. The performance data will be included in the management information shared with Bury Housing Services Executive, Board and committees.

## 6 Consultation

All relevant technical staff have been consulted in the development of this Policy. In-depth consultation has taken place with staff that have line management responsibility for the service.

Bury Housing Services' Customer Review Group will also be consulted in the development of this Policy.

## 7 Review

The Policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Management Team (on or as near as possible from the date of approval) or sooner if required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation affecting electrical safety or as a result of system audits.

An external audit will be undertaken at least annually by a recognised trade associations (NICIEC) and the results shared with the Executive Management Team along with any corrective actions required should any non-conformity be identified.

8	Equality Impact Assessment	
8.1	Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	
8.2	When was EIA conducted and by who?	
8.3	Results of EIA	
9	Scheme of Delegation	
9.1	Responsible committee for approving and monitoring implementation of the policy and any amendments to it	
9.2	Responsible officer for formulating policy and reporting to committee on its effective implementation	
9.3	Responsible officer for formulating, reviewing and monitoring implementation of procedures	

10	Amendment Record		
Date of revision:	Reason for revision:	Consultation record:	Record of amendments:
April 2022	Feedback on contents of Draft A	Circulated to BM's for comments as well as Electrical Manager	Minor amendments only. No significant changes.
April 2022	Feedback on comments on Draft B	Circulated to PMH and PH for additional review	Minor amendments only. No significant changes
April 2022	Roles of PDH and QS added Draft c	Circulated to PMH and PH for additional review	Roles of PDH and QS added and risk appendix

Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Inform

## **Appendix 1 – Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)**

The EICR is a report on the condition of the existing electrical installation. It will explain the condition of the electrical equipment, indicate whether it is damaged or worn and whether or not it is safe to use.

The report will include a number of codes to identify the any risks and the action required when an unsafe installation is identified during the inspection and testing:

**Code C1** – Danger present – the safety of those using the installation is a risk and immediate remedial action is required. In this instance, and where possible the work required will be carried out immediately and before leaving the site of the works.

**Code C2** – Potentially dangerous – the safety of those using the installation may be at risk so urgent remedial action is required to remove potential danger. In this instance the tenant will be made aware of the potentially dangerous situation and where possible the work required will be carried out immediately and before leaving the site of the works.

**Code C3** – Improvement recommended – the inspection and testing has revealed a non-compliance with the current safety standard which whilst not presenting immediate or potential danger, would result in significant safety improvement if remedied. In this instance the tenant will be made aware of the improvement required which will be referred back to the QS for decision as to what work , if any, is needed and the timescale for completion.

**Code F1** – Further investigation required – when there is reasonable doubt as to whether danger or potential danger exists, the outcome of the inspection and test is reported as unsatisfactory. The potential safety issue requires further investigation due to the limitations at the time of the inspection. The issue should be investigated as soon as possible. In this instance, the tenant will be made aware of the need for a further investigation which will referred back to the QS for a decision as to what further investigation or testing , if any, is needed and the timescale for completion.

The Electrical Co-ordinator / QS is responsible for ensuring any remedial action is identified from the EICR's produced by the electricians daily and arranging for the remedial works or further investigations to be carried out within the prescribed timescales.

The Electrical Co-ordinator / QS will produce a weekly report against each of the above action codes showing the number of actions received, completed, outstanding and overdate in the week.

The report will form part of the performance monitoring of the electrical team and will be shared with Exec, Board and committees as part of the assurance monitoring.

The EICR will identify the recommended date for the next inspection and testing to be carried out. The date of the next inspection will be determined by the electrician carryout out the EICR and will be based on the knowledge and experience of the electrical installation at that time.

## **Appendix 2 – Electrical Risk Assessment**

The following tabulated information will assist and guide the PDH and QS to ensure that ALL work is adequately supervised. (extract from NICIEC guidance)

**Table 2 – Degree of risk in electrical installation work**

<b><i>INSTALLATION WORK EXAMPLES</i></b>	<small>(note the business will be responsible for judging the degree of risk. This table is provided for guidance)</small>	<b><i>DEGREE OF RISK TO A CONSUMER</i></b>
Electrical work where the installation is isolated when not under the control of the installer e.g. ■ First fix electrical installation work ■ Second fix electrical installation work		Low
Electrical work defined in BS 7671 as Minor Works in an unoccupied building – subject to safe isolation procedures documented and implemented		Low
Electrical work defined in BS 7671 as Minor Works in an occupied building – subject to safe isolation procedures documented and implemented		Medium
All other Electrical installation work including that covered by relevant Building Regulations and Technical Handbooks.		High
Electrical work – Periodic Inspection and Testing		High

**Table 3 – Risk Factor**

<b>LEVEL OF OPERATIVE SUPERVISED (FROM TABLE 1)</b>	<b>Level 1 Operative</b> (instructed person: apprentice, improver, electrician's mate)			
	<b>Level 2 Operative</b> (instructed person: experienced, trusted)			
	<b>Level 3 Operative</b> (skilled person: equivalent to QS without role or qualification)			
		<b>Low Risk</b>	<b>Medium Risk</b>	<b>High Risk</b>
<b>DEGREE OF RISK IN THE INSTALLATION (FROM TABLE 2)</b>				

Table 4 – Degree of Supervision

<b>RISK</b>	<b>NATURE OF INSTRUCTION TO OPERATIVE</b>	<b>MINIMUM REQUIRED COMPETENCE OF INSPECTOR*</b>	<b>INVOLVEMENT OF QS ON SITE</b>
	Verbal	Satisfying the definition of a <b>Skilled Person</b> <b>(electrically)</b>	Remote
	Written		Periodic
	Written		Close and Detailed