



NLM Housing Association

Electrical Safety Policy

February 2022

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out specific guidance to ensure the safety of fixed electrical installations and portable appliances (where applicable) in properties NLM own and manage. Installations in dwellings owned and managed are to be installed, maintained and serviced to required standards and inspected at appropriate intervals to minimise the risk of electrocution, fire, damage to property, injury and or death.
- 1.2 We will ensure that a specific Electrical Service & Testing contract is in place, in accordance with best practice, which provides adequate provision for suitably qualified and accredited electrical contractors to manage all aspects of the delivery of electrical testing, repairs, upgrades and the provision of new installations.

2. Aims & Objectives

- 2.1 This policy aims to ensure that we meet our obligations as a landlord, and seeks to provide assurance that electrical safety is adequately managed, ensuring the safety of our tenants, leaseholders, shared ownership residents and the general public.

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- Set out a clear approach for the maintenance and upgrading of electrical installations;
- Ensure a prompt, efficient and cost effective electrical repair, servicing and inspection service;
- Ensure our legal compliance;
- Promote good practice;
- Ensure remedial works are carried out within appropriate timescales so that homes remain safe and electrical installations are maintained to a high standard;
- Outline a comprehensive electrical inspection and monitoring system;
- Ensure adequate records and quality monitoring systems are implemented.

3. Legislation

- 3.1 We are committed to ensuring our tenants' and leaseholders' homes remain safe and fit for purpose. In achieving this we will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations.

The following list sets out the key legislation and requirements:

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

- Housing Act 1988
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Building Regulations (including Part P requirements)
- Right to Repair Scheme (introduced 1994)
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Requirements for Electrical Installation IET Wiring Regulations 17th Edition BS7671:2008 (including all amendments)
- IET Guidance Note 3 – Inspection and Testing
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

3.2 In particular, we are committed to achieving compliance with the 18th Edition of the Institution of Engineering and Technology Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2018), which came into effect on 1st January 2019. All domestic wiring installations must now be designed, constructed, inspected, tested and certificated to meet the requirements of BS 7671:2018. Although these standards are not applicable to all works covered by this policy we will endeavour to apply them when undertaking any electrical upgrade work.

3.3 Any contractor undertaking electrical installation work must be registered through the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contractors (NICEIC) the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA), Where 'notifiable' works are required contractors must be registered with a competent person self-certification scheme, in order to certify compliance with Part P of the Building Regulations. Individual engineers working on electrical installations must be trained, competent and hold a relevant industry recognised qualifications.

4. Scope

4.1 An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical wiring and equipment that is supplied beyond the electric meter of a property. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the fabric of the building (walls, floors and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs).

4.2 This policy covers repair, upgrading, testing and inspection of all electrical installations. All electrical repairs, upgrades and renewals will be categorised to ensure that the correct levels of priority are given. We will take specific account of any vulnerability or health and safety requirements during the prioritisation process for these works. The policy also covers any portable equipment owned by the organisation.

4.3 Electrical systems will be repaired, renewed, upgraded and tested in accordance with industry guidance and manufacturers' recommendations.

4.4 Typical installations and systems covered include;

- Domestic electrical installation;
- Communal landlord installations;
- Emergency lighting systems;
- Fixed fire or carbon monoxide alarm installations;
- Door entry systems;
- Electric heating systems (including convectional and sustainable heating systems i.e. air source heat pumps);
- Portable equipment owned by the organisation.

5. Electrical Testing and Certification

5.1 Only appropriately skilled and competent persons will carry out electrical inspection and testing on NLM Properties. A person shall be deemed skilled to carry out the appropriate inspection and testing only if they have sufficient qualification, knowledge and experience as outlined in 3.3.

5.2 It is the responsibility of those undertaking inspection, testing, installation and repair to:

- Ensure no danger occurs to any person;
- Ensure no damage occurs to property;
- Compare the inspection and testing results with the design criteria;
- Take a view on the condition of the installation and advise on any remedial works and their relevant priority;
- In the event of a dangerous situation, make safe and immediately provide a recommendation to the responsible person;
- Issue appropriate certification, following review by a qualifying supervisor where appropriate and keep necessary records.

5.3 NLM will ensure that all our homes and communal installations are tested in accordance with the Institute of Engineering Technology (IET) Regulation statutory timescales. We test and issue certification prior to the re-letting of our properties. We will also carry out Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) testing on all properties that are subject to particular types of improvement works where electrical circuits are affected. Specific timescales for this work are given in 5.9 below.

5.4 The frequency of inspection and testing will be determined taking into account:

- The type of installation and adequacy of earthing and bonding;
- Suitability of the switchgear and control gear;
- Serviceability of accessories and fittings;
- Type of systems and their condition;
- Extent of any wear and tear, damage or other deterioration of other parts of the installation and level of misuse (e.g. vandalism);
- Presence of adequate identification and notices;
- Any change in use of the premises which have led to, or might lead to, deficiencies in the installation;

- EICR observations and recommendations;
- The frequency and quality of maintenance.

5.5 The Maintenance Manager will regularly review and monitor the qualifications of all contractors' employees delivering works to ensure that only appropriately trained and skilled employees are engaged on these works.

5.6 All new installations shall be provided with an Electrical Installation Certificate complete with a schedule of inspections and test results. The documents shall be suitably completed and in full compliance with BS 7671, IET Guidance Note 1 – and all current amendments.

5.7 On completion of a periodic test, certification will be issued. This will make recommendations which will be reviewed by the Compliance Officer and the necessary remedial works prioritised accordingly. Where appropriate, works will be batched and delivered through programmes, although all code C1 recommendations will be completed at the time of the periodic test and not be subject to batching. Where recommendations relate to observations only, these will be monitored through subsequent inspection and testing. Electrical works identified on certification will be recorded using the following categories:

- **Code C1:** Where a real and immediate danger is observed that puts the safety of those using the installation at risk. The contractor will advise in writing, immediately, of the urgent work necessary to remedy the deficiency;
- **Code C2:** An observed deficiency not considered to be dangerous at the time of inspection but would become a real and immediate danger if a fault or other foreseeable event was to occur;
- **Code C3:** Used to indicate that, whilst an observed deficiency is not considered to be a source of immediate or potential danger, improvement would contribute to an enhancement of the safety of the electrical installation.

5.8 NLM will test our properties in 5 year frequency for domestic properties from the date of the first installation with an inspection also carried out at change of occupancy. These frequencies should be increased if information relevant to the installation indicates signs of progressive deterioration.

5.9 Our homes will be subject to a full electrical condition report (EICR) test at the following times:

- New build - first inspection carried out 5 years after installation, thereafter every five years;
- Rewires - first inspection carried out 10 years after installation, thereafter every five years
- All other general needs stock to be inspected every five years;
- at a change of occupancy; following any major upgrade works where electrical installations are affected; at the time of a mutual exchange (if there is no power supply to carry this out, the work will be carried out as an urgent repair priority as soon as the power supply connection has been arranged by the new tenant); after any significant fire, flood or activity or occurrence that would warrant inspection.

6. Portable Appliance Testing

6.1 All equipment owned/managed by NLM will be subject to an annual portable appliance test (PAT). Appropriate labelling of equipment and recording of all equipment will be undertaken in accordance with the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.

7. Monitoring and Control

7.1 In order to ensure full compliance, monitoring will be undertaken regularly through the use of the association's core IT Meridian Compliance Software system or Register, documenting all assets and their relevant testing timescales. Compliance Officer will review the data regularly and a summary will be provided to Board and Executive Team.

7.2 Original Inspection certificates must be provided to the Compliance Officer (deemed to be the competent Persons) who will arrange for their review and electronic storage on the relevant IT system.

7.3 The NLM "Competent Person" may also engage a 3rd party audit to check for errors in both condition reports provided, and to check the quality of work undertaken on site.

8. Staff Responsibilities

8.1 The Chief Executive

Retains the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.

8.3 The Head of Assets

Is responsible for the associated procedures; this includes responsibility for monitoring, review, policy development and ensuring risks associated with electrical installations and safety are managed effectively.

8.4 The Compliance Officer

Is responsible for the operational delivery of and compliance with this policy, staff awareness & training, and communication to customers. The Maintenance Manager will take the lead on contract management for the main service areas involving electrical testing and installation etc.

8.5 Employees

All employees, irrespective of their position shall:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be adversely affected by electrical works, including members of the public, tenants, visitors and contractors;
- Co-operate as appropriate with other staff and agencies to ensure compliance with this policy and all other legal requirements;
- Halt works that, constitutes a serious risk to Health and Safety;

- Report any concerns that they may have in relation to the management of electrical compliance and electrical safety.

9. NLM Responsibilities

9.1 We will ensure that all electrical installations are installed and maintained to the relevant standards and are sufficient to meet the needs of our tenants and leaseholders. We will ensure the following:

- Sufficient socket outlets for the number of portable appliances likely to be used, in order to minimize the use of multi-socket adapters and extension leads;
- Provision is in place to prevent contact with live parts;
- Residual current device (RCD) protection is provided where appropriate;
- satisfactory earthing/bonding arrangements are present to incoming services, e.g. gas and water etc.;
- Sufficient circuits are installed to avoid danger and minimize inconvenience in the event of a fault;
- Cables, fittings and equipment are correctly specified;
- All properties meet NLM Lettable Standard;

9.2 We will make arrangements and inform tenants and leaseholders of electrical works.

9.3 NLM will take every opportunity to involve interested tenants in managing and developing this service. Including utilising their skills in procuring contracts, challenging contractor performance at core residents groups, and advising on and revised policy changes.

9.4 In achieving this we will ensure that prior to any works commencing the appointed person must assure themselves of the technical competence of the contractors and gain appropriate information relating to the skills and competence of those responsible for carrying out the works.

9.5 We recognise that in certain cases there may be underlying issues that contribute to access problems. These can relate to a support need, language or format issue, or a specific tenancy management problem. In these circumstances, where it is reasonably practicable to identify the need we will try to overcome or resolve the cause of the problem and be sensitive to the issue before pursuing legal action.

9.6 Detailed digital computerised information will be kept in line with our document retention policy for at least five years of all landlords' electrical safety certificates.

9.7 Appropriate and regular electrical safety awareness training will be provided to all Maintenance Officers and first point of contact staff.

10. Tenants Responsibility

10.1 Under the terms of their Tenancy Agreement tenants must allow access to their property for maintenance and/ or safety checks to be carried out. In order to undertake works it may be necessary to de-energise the electrical supply to the property.

10.2 Prior to undertaking any works, written confirmation will be provided in accordance with our access policy. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that:

- Any action in relation to saving electronic files i.e. IT related software, programmes or other electronic storage is taken prior to the commencement of the work;
- Any contingency arrangements arising from the absence of electrical supplies are highlighted and agreed in advance of works;
- Appropriate access and relocation/removal of any obstacles will need to be undertaken (in situations where the tenant is unable to manage support will be agreed);
- The emptying and storage of freezers/ fridges etc.;
- There is temporary provision of heating and hot water as required;
- Floor coverings such as laminate flooring are removed;
- Loft spaces are cleared;
- Any repairs or faults are reported in a timely manner.

11. Leaseholders and Shared Owners Responsibility

11.1 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.

11.2 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.

11.3 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.

12. Contractor's Responsibility

12.1 Contractors will comply with our Contractor Code of Conduct. When undertaking any electrical installation works, the contractor will also be required to conform in full with the requirements of this policy.

12.2 All appointed electrical contractors shall be registered with the NICEIC, 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.

Every effort will be made to arrange a convenient time and date with the tenant for access to complete the works. Appointments will be made and in certain situations written notice provided. In cases where access is denied on a number of pre-arranged occasions and following several written notifications, we will consider using legal action to gain access

13. Risk

13.1 Prior to commencement of any work activities, the appointed Maintenance Officer and or appointed contractor shall undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment covering the full scope of works. This assessment will include the impact of works on all tenants/leaseholders affected, especially those with vulnerabilities.

13.2 The main hazards associated with this policy are:

- Contact with exposed live exposed parts;
- Faults which could cause fires or electrocution;
- Fire or explosion where electricity could be the source of the ignition;
- Defective and inoperable systems;
- System overload;
- Inadequate or deficient earthing and bonding;
- Failure to comply with legislative requirements.