



## Bridgewater Housing Association Policy

<b>Policy name</b>	Electrical Safety Policy
<b>Policy category</b>	Property Services
<b>Policy number</b>	PS09
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<b>This review</b>	October 2023
<b>Next review</b>	October 2026
<b>Equalities impact assessment required</b>	Yes
<b>Links to other documents</b>	Electrical Safety Procedure
<b>Consultation</b>	This policy was circulated to the Property Services and Leadership teams for comment.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This policy sets out guidance to enable Bridgewater Housing Association to be assured of the electrical safety of fixed electrical installations and portable electric equipment through carrying out inspections at appropriate frequencies and ensuring maintenance standards are in place to minimise the risk of fire, injury and / or death.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all assets owned or managed by the Association.
- 1.3 A fixed electrical installation is the assembly of associated electrical equipment supplied from a common point of origin to fulfil a specific purpose and having certain coordinated characteristics.
- 1.4 A portable or movable electric appliance is any item that can be moved, either connected or disconnected from an electrical supply. Portable or movable items generally have a lead (cable) and a plug, and weight less than 18kg.

## **2. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 The key objectives of this Electrical Safety policy are to:
- Ensure that all persons are protected from harm which, could be caused by misuse of, or by faulty, electrical equipment belonging to the Association,
  - Ensure formal safe working procedures are followed when performing maintenance on electrical equipment.

## **3. EXCEPTIONS**

- 3.1 All extra low voltage systems (below 50V AC or 120 V DC) are exempt from this policy. Typical installations of this type include:
- Lift shaft Wiring and controls
  - Building management system
  - Fire alarm installation
  - Central battery-operated emergency lighting systems
  - Telephone and data system
- 3.2 Desktop computers and monitors are also excluded; however, a visual inspection is carried out when moved and every 3 years by the IT department.

## **4. NEW INSTALLATIONS**

- 4.1 All new installations shall be provided with an Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC).

## **5. FREQUENCY OF TESTING**

- 5.1 A full periodic fixed wiring test inspection will be carried by the date recommended initially within the EIC, and thereafter within the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR).

5.2 Maximum timescales for specific property types are noted below:

<b>Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO)</b>		
i)	Routine checks	None (responsibility of occupier)
ii)	Inspection & test	Every three years
<b>Community / Office Facilities</b>		
i)	Routine checks	Annually
ii)	Inspection & test	Every five years
<b>Domestic Premises</b>		
i)	Routine checks	None (responsibility of occupier)
ii)	Inspection & test	Every five years / Change of tenancy

5.3 Maximum timescales for portable appliance testing for specific property / equipment are noted below:

<b>Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO)</b>		
i)	Inspection & test	Every five years
<b>Community / Office Facilities</b>		
i)	Inspection & test	Annually

## 6. TESTS TO BE CARRIED OUT

6.1 Routine checks are visual checks only and should identify any breakages, deterioration, signs of overheating, missing parts (cover, screws) and loose fittings.

6.2 In relation to formal inspection tests, the following tests will be carried out as a minimum:

- Protective conductors' continuity
- Bonding conductors' continuity
- Ring circuit continuity
- Insulation resistance
- Polarity
- Earth electrode resistance
- Earth fault loop impedance
- Functional tests, RCDs, circuit breakers, isolators and all switching devices
- A 100% visual inspection of existing accessories
- A 30% physical inspection of existing accessories

6.3 The property where the test is being carried out requires credit in the electric meter. This must be re-iterated when a test is being booked.

## **7. MARKING AND LABELLING**

- 7.1 The provision of marking and labelling shall be provided in full accordance with BS 7671 2018 Requirements for Electrical Installations and Guidance Note 3 (Inspection and Testing) including all current amendments.
- 7.2 All tested appliances will have appropriate labelling indicating the date tested and next retest date.

## **8. RECORDS**

- 8.1 Records shall be provided in full accordance with BS 7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations and Guidance Note 3 (Inspection and Testing) including all amendments where practical. In addition, record drawings shall be suitably provided / annotated to illustrate the electrical layout and circuit configuration of the installation following the completion of fixed wiring testing and any necessary remedial work. The Association will be provided with **original** inspection certificates.
- 8.2 A list of all appliances tested will be provided following completion of testing within each facility/property.
- 8.3 All records and certificates will be digitised and uploaded to the Associations Housing Management System.
- 8.4 On occasion where the tenant does not allow a test to be carried out, the Association must document all access attempts, correspondence, and reasons why the test was not able to be carried out, on the Associations Housing Management System.

## **9. APPROVED TEST EQUIPMENT**

- 9.1 Test equipment will comply with the requirements of BS 7671 2018 Requirements for Electrical Installations and Guidance Note 3 (Inspection and Testing) including all current amendments.

## **10. RISK ASSESSMENTS**

- 10.1 Prior to commencement of any testing the contractor appointed shall provide appropriate risk assessments for the work.
- 10.2 Notification will be provided to those affected and where necessary testing may take place out of hours to mitigate identified risks.

## **11. PROGRAMME OF WORKS**

- 11.1 The Property Services Manager will ensure that an appropriate programme of works is developed and shall ensure that instructions are issued for the work to be carried out.
- 11.2 All remedial work identified will be prioritised and assigned to an appropriately competent individual.
- 11.3 This programme will be monitored monthly by the Property Services Manager.

## **12. ASSOCIATION'S RIGHT TO ACCESS**

- 12.1 The Association's procedure on Electrical Safety details the steps involved in engaging and communicating with tenants both by the contractor and the landlord in a bid to gain access to carry out an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR). The monitoring of tenants who fail to provide access will be managed by the Property Services team who will implement the various stages relating to no-access. These include making telephone calls and sending reminders to tenants where access is denied. Ultimately where access has not been successful a decision will be taken to force access to the tenants' home.
- 12.2 The Association will exercise its right under Clause 5.12 of the Tenancy agreement to take access to houses where the EICR is due, if the tenant fails to make or keep an appointment for access at a time of their choosing, in line with our approved access procedures. The Association will always work with tenants to agree access arrangements, where possible, but will revert to "take access" if necessary to maintain the safety of our properties.
- 12.3 Forcing access should be considered as the last resort by the Association and will follow hand delivered correspondence advising that it will take place. Arrangements for forcing access will ensure that two staff from the Association are in attendance, as well as the Electrician and a Joiner. Police attendance will be requested if there are any known safety concerns. The Association will reinstate the security of the property, change locks where required and leave notification of what has taken place. A note will be placed on the door advising the tenant that dependant on office hours the keys will be left either at the Association's offices or a local Police Station. All attributable costs will be pursued and recovered through the rechargeable repairs procedure.
- 12.4 Bridgewater recognises that low income and other financial pressures may contribute to "fuel poverty" which can cause tenants not to heat their home, and also be unable to keep their credit meters topped up to allow the electrician to carry out the safety check. We have amended our no-access process to try and identify these tenants and provide financial energy assistance by referring them to energy advice services.
- 12.5 Should instances such as a tenant being in hospital or severely unwell and is unable to respond to correspondence or provide the Association access to carry out the EICR, the Association will make every reasonable effort to arrange access prior to the EICR due date, such as contacting next of kin and known family members. The Association will use discretion in these cases and should access be taken as a last resort method, the tenant will not be re-charged and the Association will arrange for the new keys to be passed to the tenant.
- 12.6 The above paragraph does not apply to tenants who are on holiday at the date of service, due to the duration of advanced notice the Association gives to tenants of EICR tests.

## **13. REVIEW**

- 13.1 This Policy will be subject to a review every three years, or sooner in the event of any relevant legislative or regulatory changes or best practice guidance.

## **14. LEGISLATION**

The Equalities Act 2010  
The Housing Scotland Act 2006  
IET Wiring Regulations 18<sup>th</sup> Edition (BS 7671)

## 15. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Question	Response
1. Aim of policy/service activity/event being assessed	To ensure the Association is compliant in line Electrical Safety regulations.
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/service activity/event	<p>This policy outlines the Associations' responsibility to maintain Electrical Safety and ensuring all properties have a valid Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC) or Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) within our properties. The policy details the actions the Association will take to ensure that an EIC or EICR is carried out in all properties on or prior to the anniversary date in line with our legal obligation of every five years.</p> <p>BHA aims to have 100% of properties to have a valid EIC or EICR.</p>
3. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	Policy has been published and issued to Property Services and Leadership members for input.
4. Who is affected by the policy/service activity/event?	All Bridgewater tenanted properties, extra care facilities and common closes.
5. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/service/activity/event?	<p>This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and amended if necessitated by any events or changes to legislation.</p> <p>The Electrical Safety Procedure document is a working document that will be reviewed regularly, and any changes implemented, may result in changes to the Electrical Safety Policy.</p>

Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	Yes, positive. Contractors and staff need to be aware of particular needs of customers with any disability.	<p>Data held on SDM notifying of any customer's disabilities and how best to approach their needs when carrying out an EIC / EICR.</p> <p>Local knowledge held by members of staff that can be passed to assist contractors carry out an EIC / EICR.</p>	
Gender reassignment	No	No	We currently have no data for this characteristic, this will be addressed via our

			ongoing equalities survey.
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	No	No	We currently have limited data for this characteristic, this will be addressed via our ongoing equalities survey.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Yes, positive. There may be unsuitable times to carry out an EIC / EICR due to feeding times or sleep routines.	Customers can notify the Association of any unsuitable times to carry out an EIC / EICR, which the Association can pass on to contractors to work around.	
<b>Race</b>	No	No	We currently have limited data for this characteristic, this will be addressed via our ongoing equalities survey.
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Yes, positive. There may be unsuitable times to carry out an EIC / EICR due to prayer times.	Customers can notify the Association of any unsuitable times to carry out an EIC / EICR, which the Association can pass on to contractors to work around.	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No	No	We currently have limited data for this characteristic, this will be addressed via our ongoing equalities survey.
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Yes, positive. There may be instances where a customer may feel uncomfortable with a certain gender alone within their property when an EIC / EICR is being carried out.	Data held on SDM notifying of how best to approach the customers' needs when carrying out an EIC / EICR. This can include having member of BHA staff, whom the customer is comfortable with, attend alongside the contractor to carry out the safety check.	
<b>Age</b>	No	No	



## Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification	
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	Unlikely as the policy is closely aligned with the Association's Equality Policy. However, if a customer reported any form of discrimination, the incident would be investigated and if necessary the policy would be reviewed and amended.	
Final Decision:	Tick the relevant box	Include any explanation / justification required
No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .	✓	
You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
You can <b>adapt or change</b> the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias		
Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.		

<b>Completed by:</b>	Steven Ferrie
<b>Will this EIA be published? Yes/Not required:</b>	Yes
<b>Date completed:</b>	31/10/23
<b>Review date</b> (if applicable):	31/10/26