



POLICY

Subject/Title: Health & Safety

Business Units: The Community Housing Group & all Subsidiaries

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Author(s): Health & Safety Officer

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 The Community Housing Group (hereafter referred to as TCHG or the Group) recognises that it has the responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy work place and working environment for all its employees and similar responsibilities to others who may be affected by its activities.
- 1.02 This document has been prepared in accordance with the requirements laid out in the "Health and Safety at Work Act 1974" and all current health and safety legislation.
- 1.03 TCHG will have proper regard to the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and all other statutory or regulatory guidance in the implementation of this policy.

2.00 DEFINITIONS

- 2.01 **The Health and Safety Advisor** is a person appointed in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 2.02 **Safety representatives** are employees appointed by Trade Unions in accordance with the Safety Representative and Safety Committees regulations 1977.
- 2.03 **Health and Safety Monitoring Group** is a committee of management and employee representatives in accordance with the Safety Representative and Safety Committees regulations 1977.
- 2.04 **"Periodically"** will be between 1 and 2 years dependent on the level of risk associated with the work in question.
- 2.05 **A safe place of work** is that specified in accordance with Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

- 2.06 **A healthy working environment** is that specified in accordance with Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 2.07 **Reasonable facilities and procedures** is that specified in accordance with regulation 5 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 2.08 **Adequate welfare facilities** as defined in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- 2.09 **TCHG or the Group** is the body corporate as defined in Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 including Board Members, Executive Directors, Non-Executive Directors, Committees, Panels/Working Groups and Managers at all levels who have an influence in the decision making processes

3.00 AIMS & PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

- 3.01 The Group will take all steps within its power to meet its responsibility, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of: -
- i) Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.
 - ii) Safe arrangements for use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
 - iii) Sufficient information, instruction and supervision to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of all employees
 - iv) A safe place of work, and safe access to it
 - v) A healthy working environment
 - vi) Reasonable facilities and procedures for affording protection and care to the health of individual employees
 - vii) Adequate welfare facilities.
- 3.02 Without detracting from the primary responsibility of the Group, Directors, Managers and Supervisors for ensuring safe and healthy conditions of work, the Group will provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters where this will assist management in its tasks.
- i) The Health and Safety Advisor has specific responsibility for providing interpretations of legal requirements to managers and advice on how compliance can best be achieved.

- ii) The Health and Safety Advisor will provide advice and guidance to accident investigation teams.
 - iii) The Health and Safety Advisor will provide advice and guidance to risk assessment review teams.
 - iv) The Health and Safety Advisor will identify new initiatives designed to improve employee safety, health and wellbeing.
- 3.03 The Group recognises that their health and safety policy can only be translated into effective action with the understanding, advice and help of employees at all levels. The Group is anxious that there should be involvement and participation by all employees to secure the successful attainment of the aims of their safety and health policies. The Group will therefore co-operate fully in the appointment of safety representatives by recognised trade unions and will provide them, where necessary, with sufficient facilities, including training, to carry out this task.
- 3.04 The Group supports the setting up of a Health and Safety Monitoring Group to include safety representatives together with safety committees for departments or groups of workers, as appropriate, as a means of encouraging and maintaining the participation of all employees in creating healthy and safe working conditions.
- 3.05 The Group will appoint a Board Member as a Health and Safety Champion annually. The Champion will be a member of the Health and Safety Monitoring Group and will make quarterly reports on health and safety matters to the Group Board via the Audit Committee.
- 3.06 In accepting their responsibilities for providing healthy and safe working conditions and arrangements, the Group reminds all their employees of their own duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to take care for their own safety and that of other workers, and to co-operate with the Group so as to enable each to carry out their own responsibilities successfully.
- 3.07 Special consideration to the needs of young persons, women of child bearing age and other vulnerable groups has been made in risk assessments but where necessary additional risk assessments will be undertaken.
- 3.08 This policy together with the associated documents has been prepared to ensure that the management of health and safety risk is embedded into the Group's management culture with the aim of providing employees with a safe and healthy workplace and that the health and safety others is not affected by the Group's operations.
- 3.09 Occupational Health:-

- i) The Group will take all reasonably practicable steps to promote and safeguard the health of employees generally and as individuals.
- ii) The Group will ensure that qualified advice is sought and heeded when matters of policy are being considered which could affect the health of employees.
- iii) A health screening protocol has been agreed between the Group and its Occupational Health provider. The protocol identifies vaccinations and health areas to be screened for each employee group and the frequency of follow up checks.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Arrangements for carrying out the general Policy on Health & Safety At Work

- 4.01 The Group require all Directors, Managers and all other employees to demonstrate a high concern for all measures to secure the highest reasonable standard of Health and Safety at Work.

5.00 CONSULTATION

- 5.01 The Group will consult with staff or their representatives through the Health and Safety Monitoring Group and where appropriate the Joint Consultative Committee on all policies relating to health and safety issues.
- 5.02 Health and safety issues and initiatives will also be publicised through the Group's Team Brief system and the Group intranet.

6.00 STANDARDS OF DELIVERY

- 6.01 Whatever standards and/or requirements applicable to the Group are established either under statute or approved code of practice will be met and adhered to, however the absence of statutory standards or requirements will not be regarded as grounds for failing to promote a desirable standard.

7.00 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/TRAINING

- 7.01 TCHG is committed to Equality and Diversity and has appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- 7.02 All employees /contractors are committed to promoting and following an Equality and Diversity policy in relation to this policy.
- 7.03 All relevant employees will receive appropriate training in the effective implementation of this policy.
- 7.04 Health and safety training forms part of the Group's core training and is thus compulsory. Where identified the core health and safety training will be relevant to the member of staff and there position within the organisation.

7.05 The Group will take all reasonably practicable steps to provide high standards of health and safety training for all operators, supervisors, management and health and safety advisors. Where possible this training will be nationally accredited and refreshed in accordance with the laid down standard.

7.06 Attendance at health and safety training course will be recorded on the Group's Personnel database and copies of certificates awarded will be kept on the employee's personal file.

8.00 RESPONSIBILITY

8.01 **The Chief Executive** shall be responsible for overall co-ordination and implementation of the Group's Health and Safety at Work policies.

These responsibilities shall include:-

- i) Advising the Group through the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee of any action that may need to be taken to comply with any statute or code of practice or with the Group's approved policy on Health and Safety at Work in cases where such matters have not been delegated to officers;
- ii) Ensuring that Directors are aware of their obligations for Health and Safety at work laid down by statute, code of practice or policy or procedure agreed by the Group and to take any appropriate action so that these obligations are promptly and fully met;
- iii) Generally promoting throughout the Group and its management a positive awareness of the importance of safety at work, the maintenance of a healthy working environment and of facilities for looking after the health of employees.
- iv) Encouraging the establishment of an environment throughout the Group's service whereby the Group's commitment to the participation and involvement of employees on matters affecting their health and safety may be successfully implemented.

8.02 **Each Director** shall be responsible for ensuring within his/her department:-

- i) That the Group's policies and instructions and procedures on the health and safety of employees at work are understood by the employees concerned and are adhered to;
- ii) That new employees are acquainted with the Group's Health and Safety Policy and receive instruction and training on any hazard likely to be met during the course of their employment, and where appropriate, codes of practice or safe working guidance is prepared and copies issued to the employees concerned.

- iii) That there is a systematic and regular audit by competent persons of all offices and other workplaces, sites, plant, machinery and equipment to ensure that satisfactory standards of maintenance are upheld and that healthy work conditions exist and that records are kept of these audits;
- iv) That systems of work are safe and without hazard to health and are reviewed and audited regularly, and that records are kept of these audits.
- v) That all employees receive health and safety training appropriate to their responsibilities, duties and circumstances;
- vi) That there is a general awareness at all levels of the importance of achieving high standards of health and safety at work and that employees of the department are actively involved in the decisions on all health and safety matters which concern them within the department and where appropriate, formal safety committees or representatives of trade unions and representatives of management are formally set up in order to give opportunities of greater participation in health and safety affairs.
- vii) That representations concerning health and safety at work made by employees or their representatives or by the Group's accredited advisors on health and safety matters are promptly considered and dealt with. All actions taken must be recorded.

8.03 Each Manager/Supervisor shall be responsible for ensuring:-

- i) That work under his or her control is performed safely and without undue hazard to health by ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken and if appropriate the required safe working guidance is prepared.
- ii) That the required health and safety training is arranged and updated at the specified anniversary.
- iii) Following any work related accident or near miss involving workers under their control, convene an investigation to determine the cause of the accident and review the relevant risk assessment(s) and safe working guidance for work under their control.
- iv) The periodic inspection of workplaces to ensure health and safety rules are being followed and ensure that hazards are adequately controlled and where necessary, risk assessments and safe working guidance are amended accordingly,

- v) Carry out a review of risk assessments and safe working guidance when work practices change or following the introduction of new tools or equipment the workplace.
- vi) Review risk assessments and safe working guidance as part of the annual employee appraisal process.
- vii) That health and safety rules and procedures laid down by the Group and Management are properly followed.
- viii) That the employees under his/her control are aware of any health or safety hazard connected with their work.
- ix) To report to management, whether personally, or through the accredited safety representative, on any hazard to health and safety at work not being adequately controlled, any lapse of safety regulations affecting his or her work or any health and safety training need. All actions taken must be recorded.
- x) That appropriate action is taken concerning new hazards or the lack of safety equipment or special training needs of employees relating to work under his or her control or the facts are reported to a responsible senior departmental officer. All actions taken must be recorded.
- xi) That representations concerning health and safety at work made by an employee of the Group under his or her supervision or the employees accredited representative on health and safety matters are promptly heeded and considered and appropriate action taken. All actions taken must be recorded.

8.04 Each employee has the duty:

- i) To use protective clothing, etc., provided and to take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself, and of other persons who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions at work.
- ii) To co-operate with the Group, or his/her employer, to ensure that the Group is enabled to carry out any duty or requirement required by health and safety legislation.
- iv) To report to the supervisor whether personally or through an accredited safety representative on any hazard to health and safety at work and any lapse of safety regulations affecting his work;

- v) Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety and welfare provided in pursuance of the relevant statutory provision.

9.00 MONITORING/REVIEW

9.01 This Policy will be reviewed triennially by TCHG unless:-

- There are significant changes to legislation or regulation
- There are found to be deficiencies or failures in the Policy as a result of complaints/customer feedback or findings from any independent organisations
- Any changes to the Business Plan, Internal and External Audit, Risk Assessment and current Best Practice

9.02 The Health and Safety Monitoring Group which is a committee established under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 is the official forum through which health and safety issues are discussed. This group is the body with responsibility for monitoring health and safety performance and overseeing the review of health and safety policy and procedures.

9.03 The Group will set up, and maintain adequate records and statistics sufficient to indicate the effectiveness of its safety policies and to show areas where improvement is needed. Official Safety Representatives shall have access to these statistics at all reasonable times.

9.04 The Group will benchmark its health and safety performance against other RSL's both locally and nationally.

9.05 A copy of this statement will be made available to all employees as a paper copy held by each supervisor and published on the Group's intranet. It will be reviewed, added to, or modified from time to time and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of particular department or groups of workers.

10.00 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

10.01 Internal

- Health and Safety at Work handbook
- Specific risk assessments and safe working guidance booklets for each area of work.
- Employee Handbook.
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy

10.02 External

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996
- Health and Safety Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (First-aid) Regulations 1981
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Health & Safety