

Electrical Safety Policy

Document Control

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. As a landlord, Gravesham Borough Council places a high priority on the health and safety of its tenants, employees, contractors, and others using its housing stock.
- 1.2. In fulfilling these health and safety obligations, Gravesham Borough Council is committed to mitigating the risks posed by the use of electrical systems within the buildings it owns and controls. Risks include:
 - Electrical shock
 - Electrical burn
 - Fires of electrical origin
 - Electric arcing
 - Explosion initiated or caused by electricity
 - Electrical fire
- 1.3. The Electrical Safety Policy details how Gravesham Borough Council meets the requirements for electrical safety under current legislation and regulatory requirements. In addition to this, the policy provides assurance that measures are in place to ensure compliance with these regulations and to identify, manage and/or mitigate risks associated with electrical installations.
- 1.4. This policy is relevant to all employees, tenants, contractors, and other persons who may work on, occupy, visit, or use its premises, or who may be affected by its activities or services. It should be used by all to ensure they understand the obligations placed upon the council to maintain a safe environment for tenants and employees within the home of each tenant and within all communal areas of buildings.

2. Legal Obligations

- 2.1. Gravesham Borough Council acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities as a landlord with regard to electrical safety under the following legislation:
 - Landlords Section 3(2) of the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** (HSWA) makes provision for relevant health and safety legislation to apply to landlords to ensure a duty of care is shown to their tenants with regard to their health and safety.
 - The **Defective Premises Act 1972** imposes a duty of care on landlords in constructing or working in a dwelling. The act places a legal obligation on landlords to ensure that the properties they rent are safe and fit for habitation. The act applies to all residential properties, and its primary aim is to ensure that individuals have access to decent and safe housing.
 - Under section 11 of the **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985**, landlords are required to make repairs to the structure and exterior, as well as to installations such as boilers, pipes, and electrics. It places duties on landlords to ensure that electrical installations in rented properties are safe

when a tenancy begins and maintained in a safe condition throughout the tenancy.

- Under the **Housing Act 2004**, The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) provides a risk-based assessment tool which evaluates potential hazards in residential properties. It helps local authorities identify and address risks to residents' health and safety. The HHSRS assesses 29 categories of hazards and categorizes them as either Category 1 (serious and immediate risk) or Category 2 (less serious or urgent).
- **The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018** requires rented houses and flats are 'fit for human habitation', which means that they are safe, healthy, and free from things that could cause serious harm.
- **The Social Housing Regulation Act 2023** introduced new requirements relating to electrical safety checks, and the landlord must comply with all legal requirements for gas

3. Regulatory Compliance

3.1. The Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) (Amendment) (Extension to the Social Rented Sector) Regulations 2025 places a requirement on all Landlords to:

- Ensure every electrical installation in their residential premises is inspected and tested at intervals of no more than 5 years by a qualified and competent person.
- For new tenancies, the electrical installation must be inspected before the tenancy begins.
- Each inspection examines the installation against the electrical safety standard laid down in the Requirements for Electrical Installations: IET Wiring Regulations BS 7671 current edition.
- The person undertaking the inspection of the installation must be competent and be part of the electrical safety industry competent-person scheme.
- The person undertaking the inspection will certify their competence as part of the issue of the inspection certificate.
- Where an existing inspection certificate is available (which is not more than five years old), as the property is a new build or the electrical installation has been renewed, then this can be relied upon (until the five years expires).
- The inspection report will show that the installation is one or a combination of the following:



Outcome	Code	Action Required
Satisfactory		No further action is required
Danger is present, risk of injury	Code 1 (C1)	The danger is rectified by the competent person before leaving the property
Potentially dangerous	Code 2 (C2)	Remedial action is taken within 28 days
Further Investigation	FI	Further investigation is taken within 28 days
Recommendation	Code 3 (C3)	Outcome is advisory and improvement to the installation is recommended

The electrical installation is deemed unsatisfactory if the report finds C1, C2 or FI are present.

3.2. A copy of the inspection certificate, the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be provided by the landlord to:

- Each existing tenant within 28 days of the inspection
- A new tenant before they occupy the property, or
- A prospective tenant within 28 days of receiving a request for the report

3.3. A copy of the report must be kept by the landlord until the next report is due; then a copy of the existing report should be provided to the person undertaking the next inspection.

3.4. Where the electrical installation is deemed unsatisfactory and where further work or investigation is required, additional certification is required to deem the installation is satisfactory on the completion of remedial works.

3.5. Gravesham Borough Council will comply with all regulatory standards whilst adhering to Institution of Engineering & Technology (IET) codes of practice.

3.6. Gravesham Borough Council also acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities as an employer with regard to electrical safety under the following legislation:

- Constructions, Design and Management Regulations 2015
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

- The Workplace (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994
- RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

4. The Building Network Operator (BNO)

- 4.1. The responsibility for the electrical risers and laterals including distribution boards for multiple occupancy residential building lies with the Building Network Operator (BNO). This is the organisation that owns or operates the electricity distribution network within a multiple occupancy building, between the Distribution Network Operator (DNO), UK Power Networks intake position and customers installations.
- 4.2. The BNO may be the building owner, landlord, developer, or similar function in control of a building infrastructure at that given moment. The BNO for our housing stock is Gravesham Borough Council and is therefore responsible to ensure we adhere to the requirements of UK Power Network's Engineering Design Standard EDS 08-1103 – Multi-Occupied Building Supplies.

5. Electrical Safety Management Principles

- 5.1. Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) will carry out electrical installation inspection and tests and issue new satisfactory Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC) when completing major planned upgrade works within domestic properties, including partial and full property rewires. Where minor electrical alterations or additions are carried out, a Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate (MEIWC) will be issued.
- 5.2. We will ensure that robust processes and controls are in place to manage the completion of follow up works identified during inspection and testing of electrical installations.
- 5.3. We will routinely inspect, and test electrical portable appliance provided for the use of tenants and visitors within domestic properties and communal areas.
- 5.4. We will ensure that robust processes and controls are in place to ensure that all electrical works where required, are notified and approved under Part P of the Building Regulations for England and Wales.
- 5.5. We will ensure that robust processes and controls are in place to manage works to void and occupied properties that may affect existing electrical installations and ensure all common access areas have their electrical installations maintained so not to impose a risk to users and/or visitors.
- 5.6. We will test emergency lighting within multiple occupancy residential buildings in line with BS5266-1:2016 (plus A1:2023), and fire alarms in line with BS5839-2017.

- 5.7. GBC's appointed contractors will test the domestic smoke and heat detection during the annual gas safety inspection, and test lightening protection systems to multiple occupancy residential buildings annually.
- 5.8. We will, as good practice, carry out a thermal image heat inspections of communal consumer units and switchgear, including our BNO responsibilities for electrical installations every 5 years.
- 5.9. GBC will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments, method statements, and safe systems of work are in place for electrical works, for both our in-house operations and any contractors employed to execute the works.

6. Record Keeping

- 6.1. Gravesham Borough Council will establish and maintain a core asset register of all properties that have an active electrical supply and electrical installations within its Asset Management System. This register will identify electrical installations within all domestic properties and communal areas. Details of previous EICR inspection dates will be recorded in addition to the scheduled date of the next inspection.
- 6.2. Gravesham Borough Council will establish and maintain accurate records of all certifications relating to electrical works, including:
 - Electrical Installation Certificates (EICs),
 - Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs),
 - Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWC)
 - Building Control Certificates
- 6.3. Records will be kept for a period of not less than 5 years.

7. Quality Assurance & Compliance

- 7.1. We will operate a robust quality assurance and monitoring system to ensure that all relevant electrical documentation and certification is accurate, up-to-date and that performance by contractors is of a sufficiently high standard to ensure that our landlord obligations are met.
- 7.2. An agreed percentage of electrical work will be monitored for quality through an appropriately qualified external consultant contracted by us. Any non-compliance issue identified will be recorded and action taken to address it.
- 7.3. An agreed percentage of electrical reports and/or certification will be independently verified by a qualified external consultant. Any non-compliance issue identified will be recorded and action taken to address it.
- 7.4. In cases of a serious non-compliance issue consideration will be given to whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing in the spirit of co-regulation as part of the Regulatory Framework

8. Competent Persons & Training

- 8.1. We will ensure that all members of staff responsible for managing electrical processes and programmes of work are adequately trained to do so. All operational front-line staff will undertake electrical awareness training on an annual basis
- 8.2. We will ensure that contractors registered with a UKAS accredited Competent Persons Scheme are procured and appointed to deliver all electrically related work programmes. Our internal operation will also be registered with such a scheme.
- 8.3. We will ensure that all engineers operating for us and on behalf of appointed contractors, are adequately qualified and competent to undertake such works. Evidence will be obtained, stored, and remain accessible at all times. Additional evidence maybe required throughout the duration of contracts as and when new contractors and/or engineers are procured/introduced.
- 8.4. We will ensure that all electrical testing equipment used by employees is subject to ongoing calibration and accuracy checks. Adequate records will always be kept and remain accessible.
- 8.5. We will obtain evidence on at least an annual basis, of on-going calibration and accuracy records of electrical testing equipment used by contractors. Additional evidence may be required throughout the duration of contracts as and when new contractors and/or engineers are procured/introduced.
- 8.6. We will ensure that contractors conduct internal quality assurance checks of electrical works undertaken by their own employees on an ongoing basis. Adequate records will always be kept and remain accessible.
- 8.7. We will obtain evidence on an ongoing basis, of quality assurance checks undertaken internally by contractors on their own engineers who are undertaking electrical works. Adequate records will always be kept and remain accessible.
- 8.8. We will use independent third parties to conduct quality assurance checks of electrical works undertaken. The nature of the quality assurance regime will be applied across all workstreams and will include both post-completion and work-in-progress inspections in addition to desktop reviews. Findings will be reviewed, necessary action taken, and relevant measures implemented to improve the quality of works moving forward as required.
- 8.9. A person shall be deemed competent to conduct the appropriate inspection and testing only if they have sufficient knowledge and experience of the test equipment, the installation being tested and testing procedures.

9. Non-Compliance

- 9.1. The definition of non-compliance in relation to this policy refers to any incident which results in a potential breach of legislation or regulatory standard, or which causes or has the potential to cause a significant risk to health and safety.

9.2. Any non-compliance issues identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Head of Housing Assets in the first instance in order to address the non-compliance issue and agree an appropriate course of corrective action.

9.3. If cases of a serious non-compliance issue, this will be reported to the Assistant Director (Housing) and the council's Monitoring Officer who will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the non-compliance issue to the Regulator of Social Housing in the spirit of co-regulation, or any other organisation such as the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), as part of the Regulatory Framework.

10. Approved Testing Equipment

10.1. All test equipment will meet the requirements of GS38 Health & Safety Equipment and shall be appropriately recalibrated and comply with the requirements of 'BS 7671: 2015 Requirements for Electrical Installations and Guidance Note 3 (Inspection and Testing)' including all amendments.

11. Tenant Responsibilities

11.1. Council 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.

11.2. The council does 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).

11.3. Where tenants discover a problem with council owned or supplied electrical systems or equipment, they should inform the council by contacting the Housing Operations Team immediately on 01474 33 77 77. Any faults with the electrical supply will be treated as an emergency job and will respond within 24 hours (within two hours if there is a threat to health and safety) and within 28 working days for non-emergency jobs.

11.4. As part of the fixed installation inspection and testing, it is necessary to de-energise the electrical supply to the property. All tenanted properties where electrical inspection and testing is to be carried out, shall be notified in writing of a proposed appointment to complete the electrical inspection and test. This written notification shall also inform the tenant of the requirement to temporarily disconnect the power supply, and the tenant shall ensure:

- Appropriate access for the technician and provide access to all electrical sockets and switches
- Ensure perishable food stuffs kept in fridges and freezers are protected during the test, to maintain food safety

- 11.5. As part of the tenancy agreement, tenants must not alter the electrical installations within a property unless they have permission in writing from the Housing Management Team. Any electrical work carried out by the tenant or their contractor, must be certified by a competent electrician with a copy being provided to the Housing Team. This will then be entered onto the Asset Management/ Repairs system for future reference.

12. Non-Access

- 12.1. Gravesham Borough Council will adopt a 'fair but firm' approach to gaining access to domestic properties where periodical electrical testing, upgrades or remedial works are required. We will take all necessary steps to ensure we gains access to all properties to in order to comply with our obligations in respect of electrical safety. Access will be obtained in line with our Access Policy

13. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Head of Housing Assets	<p>Monitoring overall compliance and performance against this policy.</p> <p>Determining whether individual instances of non-compliance should be escalated internally.</p> <p>Ensuring staff have the necessary information, instruction, and training to fulfil their roles and responsibilities under this policy.</p>
Building Safety & Investments Manager	<p>Identifying all locations where an electrical system and/or electrical equipment is located which are owned and managed by us.</p> <p>Making and keeping an up-to-date record of the location of all electrical installation and/or electrical equipment.</p> <p>Ensuring that any property, and any electrical equipment provided, is safe throughout the duration of the tenancy.</p> <p>Obtaining and storing on-going work records so to evidence the maintenance of electrical installations and electrical equipment.</p>
Allocations & Voids Manager	<p>Ensuring that any property, and any electrical equipment provided, is safe before a tenancy begins.</p>
Electrical Supervisor	<p>Responsible for managing work carried out by staff and contractors in relation to electrical safety to ensure it is undertaken in line with this policy.</p>

14. Policy Review

- 14.1. We will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years or sooner subject to legal, regulatory changes or if internal changes require it.