

## Fire Safety Policy

July 2019 v4.0

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 This document covers Thirteen's policy on fire safety and how we will meet our responsibilities and duties as a leading landlord and housing developer, managing 34,000 properties, exceeding 70,000 customers and employing 1,600 staff.
- 1.2 Thirteen considers health and safety as paramount. It is the primary intent of this policy to outline our responsibilities and legal obligations stipulated within the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) 2005, and other associated legislation and Guidance documents, with the aim of eliminating the risk of fire to all relevant persons utilising our assets and services.
- 1.3 This policy demonstrates our commitment to ensure full compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements associated with the management of fire safety within all buildings owned and managed by Thirteen.
- 1.4 The success of this policy depends on the positive working relationships between inter-departmental teams alongside external contractors, and the effective implementation of agreed procedures. All staff and contractors working within the field of fire safety will be competently trained with all associated compliance certification and documentation aligned to service standards. Competency assessments will be carried out at frequencies agreed between all parties.
- 1.5 The policy will be adapted to respond to future legislative or regulatory changes with considerations for business continuity and maximising opportunities for service investments and improvements.
- 1.6 Where properties are managed on behalf of external property owner's, statutory responsibility will be detailed within terms of the management agreement.
- 1.7 The Fire Safety Policy is 1 of 3 policy documents covering the statutory areas of compliance relevant where managing both domestic and commercial properties. The linkage between these documents is shown below:



- 1.8 Information supporting the Asbestos Management Policy will be delivered in detailed procedural documents.

## 2 REFERENCE MATERIAL

- 2.1 All relevant fire safety legislation and regulatory documents that Thirteen will comply with are set out in **Appendix A**. Our wider organisational commitment to health and safety is detailed within our Health and Safety Policy.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 A statement of exact meanings for this policy is outlined below:

Term	Definition
High Risk Residential Building	Defined by Thirteen as being a multi occupancy building of significant height and/or complexity within the building or tenure type
High Rise Block	Refers to buildings 18 meters or more in height
Resident	Refers to all occupants who reside in the premises
Tenant	Refers to all individuals who have a tenancy agreement or leasehold agreement with Thirteen

## 4 POLICY CONTENTS

### 4.1 High Risk Residential Buildings (HRRBs)

Following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, and the follow up 'Building a Safer Future. Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Final Report' published in May 2018 by Dame Judith Hackitt, Thirteen carried out a review of all the High Risk Residential Buildings (HRRB) within our asset portfolio. Each building has undergone an in-depth fire risk assessment of all the fire safety compliance attributes, with mitigating contingencies put in place, to reassure residents of their safety regarding fire risk. Details of compliance attributes and fire safety advisory statements specific to each HRRB have been documented within a database, with bespoke fire safety strategies being commissioned for each block.

To ensure the principle of risk is owned and managed robustly, the internal compliance team has been expanded to ensure a high level of knowledge, expertise and competence exists. An audit trail of transparent information is maintained to provide reassurance and evidence that the buildings continue to be safe.

### 4.2 Fire Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments (FRAs) are designed to minimise and control risk through the lifetime of a building whilst it remains under occupation. Thirteen conduct FRAs at various intervals depending on the categorisation of stock type detailed over the page.

<b>Building Type</b>	<b>FRA Frequency</b>
High Rise Block	Every six months.
High Risk Residential Building (excluding High Rise Blocks)	Every twelve months.
Low Rise Block	Every twenty-four months.
Internal Offices	Every twelve months

In addition to the above, Thirteen may conduct an FRA regardless of building type, tenure type and risk category if:

- a) A fire occurs, a near miss or threat of arson;
- b) Any changes occur which may impact upon fire risks;
- c) There has been any structural or material changes to a building or its use;
- d) There is a change or the legislation or associated key guidance.

All assessments, works and documentation are completed in accordance with the statutory regulations detailed in the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005 (RRO 2005).

#### **4.3 Evacuation Protocol**

In accordance with Article 14 of the RRO 2005, emergency procedures are in place to ensure safe evacuation in the event of a fire. Evacuation variations are detailed in the fire safety advisory statements for each location across Thirteen, with the bespoke fire safety strategies capturing the detail for high rise blocks were applicable. Details are stored on each site and displayed publicly with the suitability evacuation points assessed annually as part of the FRA.

Evacuation drills are carried out in all non-residential buildings bi-annually, any additional requirements are determined within the FRA.

Within commercial premises, managed schemes, and all high rise, where assistance to escape is required, Thirteen develop specific Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to identify support needs. All new employees to the organisation are inducted on the fire evacuation procedure for the building they occupy.

#### **4.4 Emergency Lighting**

Emergency lighting is a requirement in any situation where normal illumination fails and is a regulatory part of the fire safety provision of a building. Specifically, Thirteen ensures a provision of emergency escape lighting which gives controlled illumination for the safe evacuation of a building with the trigger being an integral part of the fire alarm activation. Details of emergency escape lighting and location requirements are captured within the FRA.

Electrical Installation Condition Reports are carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 7671, the UK standard for the safety of electrical installations. Further information can be found in the Electrical Policy.

#### **4.5 Fire Alarms**

Fire alarms are a fundamental indicator to advise a fire has been detected, triggered by heat detection, smoke detection or via a manual break point. Thirteen ensures adequate fire alarm protection to provide a safe level of cover across its assets, interlinked with other fire safety provisions for robust awareness and safe evacuation.

Thirteen Fire Systems range between conventional fire alarm systems and analogue addressable fire alarm systems. Testing and maintenance schedules are determined by current codes of practices.

#### **4.6 Smoke Ventilation Systems**

Smoke ventilation systems allow for heat and smoke extraction, with the purpose of keeping escape and access routes clear in the event of a fire. Requirements dictated in British Standards, along with the individual building assessments on Thirteen assets, indicate the most appropriate system for the redirection and removal of dangerous fumes for smoke control. Systems designed within Thirteen asset's, range from:

- a) A pressurisation system;
- b) A natural smoke ventilation system;
- c) An automatic opening ventilation system (AOV).

Servicing on all smoke ventilation systems is carried out twice a year by a specialist smoke control contractor with maintenance records submitted to Thirteen.

#### **4.7 Suppression Systems (Sprinklers)**

Fire suppression systems are only a mandatory requirement on buildings built after 2007 and that are over 18m tall. Not all Thirteen owned and managed buildings have suppression systems in place, however, as an effective tool in preventing the spread of fire.

It is possible to install suppression systems retrospectively, and Thirteen have made a recent commitment to our residents who occupy our high-rise blocks is that we will look to retrofit suppression systems to all blocks. This will be delivered at the optimum time i.e. during the delivery of other refurbishment works, to limit disruption to residents.

As an additional fire safety mechanism in high rise blocks, Thirteen have installed a bin damper in all bin rooms which is activated by heat detection, preventing fire travelling up the chute into residential areas.

Regulatory design is detailed in BS 9251 with risk assessments on Thirteen assets considering run times, design and discharge density. Testing is conducted monthly with an annual service requirement carried out by a qualified and competent engineer.

#### **4.8 Fire Extinguishers**

Thirteen do not advocate the use of fire extinguishers in any situation, however, we recognise fire extinguishers are an integral part of the fire safety provision and each building has been assessed to ensure the appropriate extinguishers are available and located in communal and high-risk areas. The discharging of a fire extinguishers is only to be carried out by a trained individual.

There are two categorisations of fire extinguisher, stored pressure extinguishers and cartridge operated extinguishers, both have a requirement for an annual service to a standard laid down in the BS 5306-3:2009. Services are carried out by an accredited company with the associated documentation issued to Thirteen. Any extinguisher not replaced in a 5-year period is subject to an extensive service detailed specifically within the manufacturer guidance.

#### **4.9 Dry Risers**

In accordance with the BS 9990:2015 regulations, dry risers are installed in all buildings more than 18m tall and less than 60m tall. The 'none pressurised water

distribution system' is compartmented in a fire-resistant shaft with inlet and outlet connectors proportioned around the building. Any buildings over 60m tall require a wet riser installation system, however Thirteen have no buildings that fall within this category.

A visual inspection is conducted every 6 months with a service being carried out annually.

#### **4.10 Passive Fire Protection**

Passive fire protection can prevent the spread of fire in HRRB, following any major works Thirteen commission a building compartmentation health check, upon job completion, to ensure the integrity of the building's construction.

#### **4.11 Qualifications and Training**

Thirteen will provide training which is task specific to those with specific roles within this Fire Safety Policy, responsible persons and others with delegated Fire Safety duties.

Thirteen will ensure any subcontractors / agencies carrying out Fire Safety works on the organisation's behalf will be qualified to the appropriate standards. Competency assessments will be carried out at frequencies agreed between all parties.

#### **4.12 Communication**

Thirteen commits to communicate with residents all appropriate fire safety information on a regular basis through any available media sources necessary, including, but not inclusive of, signage, newsletters, resident group meetings, electronic media boards, website and new tenant sign up packs.

Thirteen will liaise with the Local Fire and Rescue Services, frequently engaging in effective two-way communication to ensure operational familiarity of Thirteen Buildings and practices.

In the event of a major incident communication will be issued in accordance with the Thirteen Resilience Plan.

## **5 GOVERNANCE INFORMATION**

<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	In delivering the Fire Safety Policy Thirteen aims to treat all residents fairly. Where additional support is required, individual equality assessments or PEEPS are carried out depending on their needs, services and dwelling type. Results from each assessment are accommodated for within specifications, delivery works and documentation to ensure we meet the needs of a resident or household but remain within the regulatory constraints.
<b>Customer Involvement and Consultation</b>	The Fire Safety Policy will be consulted on with the relevant customer involvement group as advised by the Governance and Compliance Team. Consultation will also to be carried out internally with the Property Services Assets team, Staff Health and Safety Working Group, Property Services Health and Safety Working Group, Health and Safety Committee and Fire Safety Forum.
<b>Monitoring and Review</b>	This policy will be reviewed every three years from the approval date, or in-line with impacting corporate, legislative or regulatory change requirements. Reviews will be conducted by a competent delegate

	<p>within the Thirteen and submitted to Governance Team for corporate approval prior to publication.</p> <p>The supporting procedural documents can be updated at any time and the changes can be implemented following sign off from the service area Director or competent delegate within Thirteen.</p> <p>Key performance indicators associated to the compliance aspects of fire safety will be monitored and reported internally utilising reporting mechanisms within our software packages.</p> <p>Where appropriate, valid certification will be issued for any works undertaken on a Thirteen asset with all electronic data being logged within a Thirteen database and managed and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.</p>
<b>Responsibility</b>	<p>As a Registered Social Landlord, we have a statutory responsibility to comply with all relevant health, safety and compliance requirements. Failure to properly discharge these responsibilities may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Prosecution by the Health and safety executive under the Health and Safety at work Act 1974.</li> <li>b) Prosecution under Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.</li> </ul> <p>The Board and Chief Executive Officer are responsible for seeking evidenced assurance that all health and safety legislation relating to compliance is being adhered to, that the risks associated with compliance are identified and managed, and that a proper control and assurance framework is in place. This will be demonstrated through Key Performance Indicators (KPI) reporting to the Board, Risk and Audit Committee and throughout the Group regularly.</p> <p>The accountable person with respect to fire safety under the terms of this policy is Thirteen Housing Group.</p>

## 6 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A – Reference Material



## 9.1 APPENDIX A

### Reference Material

Reference material used for consideration in formulating this document is outlined below, if a Standard or Act is withdrawn, repealed or superseded Thirteen reserve the right to follow the new guidance:

- Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002.
- Furniture and Furnishings (Fire Safety) Regulations 1988.
- Smoke Detectors Act 1991.
- Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998.
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Building Regulations 2006 Approved Document B (Fire safety) – Volume: Dwelling houses, and all relevant British Standards.
- BS 7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations
- British Standard BS 5306-3 Fire extinguishing installations and equipment on premises. Commissioning and maintenance of portable fire extinguishers. Code of practice.
- British Standard BS 9990 automatic fire-fighting systems in buildings. Code of practice.
- British Standard BS 9991 Fire safety in the design, management and use of residential buildings. Code of practice.
- European Standard BS EN 12101 Smoke and Heat Control Systems.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- British Standard BS 5389 Part 1 Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of systems in non-domestic premises.
- British Standard BS 5389 Part 6 Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for the design, installation, commissioning and maintenance of fire detection and fire alarm systems in domestic premises.
- British Standard BS 5266. Emergency lighting. Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises.
- British Standard BS 9999 Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings. Code of practice.
- British Standard BS 9251 Fire sprinkler systems for domestic and residential occupancies. Code of practice.
- British Standard BS EN 12845 Fixed firefighting systems. Automatic sprinkler systems. Design, installation and maintenance.
- British Standard BS 5906 Waste management in buildings. Code of practice.
- British Standard BS EN 62305 Protection against lightning. General principles.
- BS EN 15004-9:2017 Fixed firefighting system. Gas extinguishing systems. Physical properties and system design of gas extinguishing systems for IG-55 extinguishing.
- Health & Safety Guide 245 Investigating Accidents and Incidents.

This list is not exhaustive, and Thirteen will follow all other additional ACOPs and Regulation/Legislation applicable to fire safety.