

Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

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Person Responsible:	Chief Executive
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Approved by:	Audit and Risk Committee
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Document management		
Version	Date amended	Amendments
1		Update to the previous policy

1. Purpose

This document outlines South Lakes Housing's general policy on Health, Safety and Welfare at work. The aim of the policy is to comply with health and safety legislation and regulations but also to facilitate a culture of managing safety and promoting a healthy workplace.

This will be achieved by focussing on the following:

- General statement on Health, Safety and Welfare
- Organisation and responsibility
- General arrangements
- Enforcement

These are set out in more detail under Section 4 and in the supporting policies, procedures, method statements and risk assessments.

2. Regulatory and Legislative Requirements

This policy complies with the UK Health and Safety legislation and regulations. This includes:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974**
 - This Act places a legal duty on employers to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees, and to ensure that employees and others are kept safe.
 - Under the Act, SLH has an obligation to ensure any potential risk of work-related harm or Injury is eliminated or controlled.
 - As an organisation with more than five employees SLH must have a written health and safety policy statement, setting out how we manage health safety and welfare in our organisation.

- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) 1999**
 - These Regulations require employers to consider the health and safety risks to employees and to carry out risk assessments to protect employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable risks. A risk assessment is an examination to:
 - determine what hazards exist in the workplace;
 - establish the significance of the risk;
 - identify and implement prevention and control measures; and
 - produce a clear management action plan.
 - As an employer with more than five employees, we must record the significant findings of our risk assessments and any groups of employees identified by them as being especially at risk. In addition, employers have a requirement to appoint competent people, set up emergency procedures, provide information to employees and work together with employers sharing the same workplace.
 - Employees, on the other hand, are required to use the information/training they have received, and to report dangerous situations/shortcomings in health and safety arrangements.

- **Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977:** require employers to consult with any nominated representatives in their workplaces.

- **Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992:** cover a wide range of basic health, safety and welfare issues such as ventilation, heating, lighting, workstations, seating and welfare facilities.

- **Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992:** set out requirements for work with Visual Display Units (VDUs).

- **Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992:** require employers to Provide appropriate protective clothing and equipment for their employees.
- **Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998:** require that equipment provided for use at work, including machinery, is safe.
- **Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992:** cover the moving of objects by hand or bodily force.
- **Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981:** cover requirements for first aid.
- **The Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989:** require employers to display a poster telling employees what they need to know about health and safety.
- **Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969:** require employers to take out insurance against accidents and ill health to their employees.
- **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR):** require employers to notify certain occupational injuries, diseases and dangerous events.
- **Noise at Work Regulations 1989:** require employers to act to protect employees from hearing damage.
- **Electricity at Work Regulations 1989:** require people in control of electrical systems to ensure they are safe to use and maintained in a safe condition.
- **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH):** require employers to assess the risks from hazardous substances and take appropriate precautions.
- **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015:** cover safe systems of work on construction sites.
- **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994:** cover safe installation, maintenance and use of gas systems and appliances in domestic and commercial premises.
- **Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012:** cover specific duties for employers to manage the risk of exposure to asbestos in buildings they control where employees and others carry out work or other activities that could cause exposure.

- **The Control of Lead at Work Regulations:** place a duty on employers to prevent or control employee exposure to lead.
- **Ionising Radiation Regulation 2017:** requires employers to keep exposure to ionising radiations as low as reasonably practicable. From sources such as; electrical equipment emitting ionising radiation or naturally occurring radon gas and its decay products.

3. General Principles

The overall aim of this policy is to ensure that SLH complies with health and safety legislation and to provide a framework for facilitating a health, safety and welfare culture.

4. Health, Safety and Welfare – Our Approach

This divides in to four areas: General statement, organisation and responsibilities, general arrangements and enforcement.

4.1 Chief Executive's Statement of Commitment

SLH and its subsidiary company, Cumbrian Housing & Property Services Ltd (CH&PS) are committed to safeguarding the health safety and welfare at work of all employees, contractors, sub-contractors, visitors and those who may be affected by its work activities. This policy also applies to CH&PS.

As Chief Executive I accept the duties and obligations imposed upon me by all relevant safety legislation and realise the importance of placing health safety and welfare as an over-riding priority within SLH. The SLH Board and the SLH Executive Management Team will support me in this role.

Subsidiaries to SLH shall have their own Health, Safety and Welfare policy statement reflecting the structure and responsibilities pertinent to their specific activities but shall generally conduct themselves in accordance with and with reference to this and all other relevant SLH policies. These statements shall be held as sub-files to this policy.

Whilst accepting the legal standards set by national legislation, SLH is committed to promoting a safety culture that aims to produce the highest standards of health safety and welfare. This process will continue to raise standards within SLH beyond the legal requirements. I believe that achieving these high standards will positively contribute to the overall quality of the work environment and services provided by SLH. I will make available sufficient resources to ensure that they are met.

I accept that although the final level of responsibility for implementing SLH's Health Safety and Welfare (HS&W) policy rests with me, each and every individual employee must take an active role in effectively implementing the policy in line with the responsibilities framework set out in the 'Organisation' section. I urge all employees to co-operate fully in the measures that SLH will be taking as part of this policy, to ensure that their work situations are as safe and healthy as possible.

The SLH Executive Management Team will deputise for me as required on Health, Safety and Welfare matters.

4.2 Organisation and Responsibility

Board Directors

The leadership of an effective health and safety culture comes from the top; Board Directors of the Board have both collective and individual responsibility for the leadership of health safety and welfare (as well as compliance). Executive Directors and Board Directors shall continually examine their behaviours, both individually and collectively, against guidance and information given and available - and, where they see that they fall short of the standards it sets them, shall become more effective leaders in health, safety and welfare.

Non-executive Board Directors shall ensure the organisation gets the right direction and leadership on health safety and welfare matters.

They shall also perform a scrutinising role, ensuring the integrity of processes primarily through the following;

- The Audit and Risk Committee 'terms of reference' include identification of key areas for improvement in business management of the health & safety management.
- The Audit and Risk Committee monitoring of Health Safety and Welfare compliance via a quarterly 'compliance' report, including Health Safety and Welfare dashboard and 'deep dives'.
- The Audit and Risk Committee approving an annual Internal Audit plan which involves receiving assurance on Health Safety and Welfare compliance.

What is safety culture?

"The safety culture of an organisation is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organisation's health and safety management. Organisations with a positive safety culture are characterised by communications founded on mutual trust, by shared perceptions of the importance of safety and by confidence in the efficacy of preventive measures."

ACSNI Human Factors Study Group: Third report - Organising for safety HSE Books 1993

- The Audit and Risk Committee monitoring the implementation of Internal Audit reports throughout the year and commissioning an annual 'follow-up' review.
- The full Board receiving quarterly performance and risk reports, including exception reporting on Health & Safety.
- The Full Board shall receive annual Health and Safety Report, from the Health and Safety Manager.
- Board Directors receiving training to ensure their competence in their scrutineering role.
- Beyond scrutiny the Board directs responsibility for Health, Safety and Welfare to the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors.

Executive Management Team

As well as having duties under SLH's Health, Safety and Welfare Statement, the Directors are personally responsible for the effective implementation of the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy in their areas and will ensure they are competent to;

- Provide leadership on occupational health, safety and welfare to their managers, employees, contractors and sub-contractors and support improvements in safety standards and culture.
- Participate in recognised Health Safety and Welfare training for their responsibilities.
- Shall appoint and ensure that all staff under them are competent to fulfil the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, shall identify and commission appropriate Health Safety and Welfare Training for their staff.
- Shall fully and clearly assign duties and responsibilities.
- Will consult with the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager and any other employees to monitor the need for any further Health, Safety and Welfare measures, instruction or training to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and other people who may be affected by the activities of their area.
- Will consult with the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager and other employees to keep informed of any accidents, incidents or Health, Safety and Welfare issues occurring within their area.
- Will appoint, a named competent Senior Manager who will deputise on all matters involving Health, Safety and Welfare at work in their absence.

Senior Managers

Each Senior Manager will be responsible for the day to day operation of all Health, Safety and Welfare systems and procedures within their Service Area.

They will be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their area of responsibility and should demonstrate their competency to do so. They will carry out the following duties in consultation with the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager and other appropriate officers;

- Provide leadership on occupational health, safety and welfare to their managers, employees, contractors and sub-contractors and support improvements in safety standards and culture.

- Participate in recognised Health Safety and Welfare training for their responsibilities.
- Shall appoint and ensure that all staff under them are competent to fulfil the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, shall identify and commission appropriate Health Safety and Welfare Training for their staff.
- Ensure that occupational health, safety and welfare issues are taken into account in all service development plans and at the design stage of new initiatives.
- Satisfy themselves that the established safety standards are maintained and arrange for any shortcomings in safety standards, inspections, training and instruction are rectified.
- Keep themselves informed of any accidents, incidents and Health, Safety and Welfare issues occurring in their area of responsibility.
- Monitor the necessary records for further Health, Safety and Welfare measures, instruction and training.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and method statements are carried out in their area of responsibility. These should be recorded, shared with the relevant staff, and reviewed at least yearly (or sooner if there is any significant change), and modified if necessary. Ensure that all employees in their area of responsibility have been informed of any risks to their health and safety.
- Ensure that they and their teams are complying with lone worker risk assessments and using devices and following escalation procedures.
- In the absence of the Senior Manager a named competent officer will deputise on all matters involving Health, Safety and Welfare at work.

Other officers with management/supervisory responsibility

Staff who manage, supervise or have responsibility for employees, contractors, sub-contractors, trainees or members of the public are accountable for Health, Safety and Welfare within their management control. They will;

- Provide management of occupational health, safety and welfare to their staff and support improvements in Health, Safety and Welfare standards and culture.
- Participate in recognised Health Safety and Welfare training for their responsibilities.
- Shall ensure that all staff under them are competent to fulfil the duties and responsibilities assigned to them, and that they attend assigned Health Safety and Welfare Training.
- Ensure that occupational Health, Safety and Welfare issues are taken into account at the design stage of new initiatives and projects.
- Be responsible for taking the necessary steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees, trainees and other persons who may be affected by work activities (e.g. visitors, members of the public, contractors and subcontractors) these steps should be recorded on method statements.
- Continually assess the risks to Health, Safety and Welfare in their area of responsibility. Ensure that all significant hazards arising in their area of responsibility are adequately addressed.

- Where risks cannot immediately be eliminated, ensure that reasonable action is taken to reduce the risk to the lowest level practicable. These actions should be recorded on a risk assessment form and brought to the attention of those affected.
- Ensure that accidents and incidents within their area of responsibility are reported promptly to the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager, as required by the Accident Reporting Procedure and ensure that incidents are investigated, and reasonable action is taken to prevent a recurrence.
- Ensure that all members of staff in their area of responsibility receive appropriate Health, Safety and Welfare training, with specific regard to the safety of themselves and others, and have sufficient knowledge, skills and information to carry out their work safely.
- Ensure that new staff are given an appropriate workplace safety induction during the first week at work.
- Ensure that they and their staff are kept up to date with all relevant Health, Safety and Welfare information (e.g. consult the Health & Safety website portal regularly).
- Ensure that all employees (including contractors and sub-contractors), where required, have appropriate protective equipment and clothing, and are given suitable information, training and instruction on its use.
- Ensure that they and their teams are complying with lone worker risk assessments and using devices and following escalation procedures. Managers will monitor usage of lone worker devices and deal with any performance issues.

All employees, contractors, sub-contractors and agency staff working for SLH.

All directly or indirectly employed personnel will;

- Comply with safe systems of work and procedures at all times whilst at work and conduct themselves in such a manner so that they, or other people, are not put at risk by their activities.
- Co-operate with supervisors and managers on all matters affecting Health, Safety and Welfare at work.
- Participate in recognised Health Safety and Welfare training for their responsibilities.
- Report any hazard or defects that may affect health safety and wellbeing to their supervisor or manager immediately.
- Immediately report all accidents, incidents and near misses occurring in their area of work to their manager/supervisor and follow the accident/incident reporting procedure.
- Wear the necessary protective clothing and use the correct safety equipment and PPE provided by or required by SLH
- Keep up to date with Health, Safety and Welfare policies, procedures and guidance as required by their supervisor or manager.
- Only use machinery/equipment for which they have been fully instructed and trained.
- Feel free to make suggestions to their Manager or any member of the Executive Management Team which may improve the Health, Safety and Welfare of employees or anyone affected by the work of SLH.

- Only use a mobile device whilst it is safe to do so and never whilst they are driving.
- Comply with COSHH regulations.
- Never work at height above three steps unless adequately trained in Working at Height.
- Comply with the Lone Working Policy, including the use of devices.

Health, Safety and Welfare Manager

The Health, Safety and Welfare Manager will;

- Promote a positive occupational Health, Safety and Welfare culture that aims for the highest standards from all members of the organisation.
- Produce regular performance reports on H&S compliance issues.
- Manage SLH's Safety Management System and report to senior management on occupational safety performance and standards.
- Advise and inform directors, managers and employees on all aspects of occupational health, safety and welfare and provide advice on new legislation and policies impacting on the work of SLH.
- Attend meetings, provide advice, training and undertake site visits to monitor the practice of health, safety and welfare.
- Coordinate and maintain health and safety related accreditations.
- Maintain an incident reporting, recording and investigation system, including HSE notifications and RIDDOR reporting.
- Have the authority to stop work in extreme cases where there is a risk of serious personal injury or death.

Human Resources

The HR Manager will ensure that there is an appropriate budget for Health, Safety and Welfare training and equipment. The HR Manager is responsible for ensuring there is an up to date record of all staff training on health and safety.

4.3 General Arrangements for Health and Safety

In order to promote a Health, Safety and Welfare culture that aims to produce high standards, the following arrangements are in place.

Supporting Information

SLH has a comprehensive suite of supporting; Policies, Policy Statements, Risk Assessments, Method Statements, Tool Box Talks, Staff Briefings, Safety Code of Conduct/Code of Working Practice and Working Processes

Safety Training

Safety training forms an integral part of training within SLH. This is particularly important with induction training for new staff Managers should ensure this takes place.

The Health, Safety and Welfare training needs of employees should be the subject of periodic reviews by managers and supervisors and any necessary refresher training carried out.

All employees should have sufficient knowledge, skills, and information to carry out their work safely.

Health Monitoring

Health monitoring is an informal, non-statutory method of surveying our workforce for symptoms of ill health.

Health surveillance is not needed for most workers, but in some work situations and for some exposures/activities it is required by law. SLH will develop its monitoring process to the best practice standard of its sector for the exposure its employees may experience.

Reporting of accident /incidents under RIDDOR

Some types of accident/incident require reporting to the enforcing authorities. This decision should be made by a relevant (and available) senior manager (*after consulting with the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager, if available, who will confirm whether the incident is reportable and advise on the completion of the online report form*).

Accident/incident/near miss investigation

Unless the incident is trivial, all accidents, incidents or near misses shall have an appropriate level investigation and report (root cause analysis) conducted by the appropriate level manager of the relevant area. Adverse or causal conditions will be rectified, and briefings or training will be given to affected staff. This will help to ensure that the incident is not repeated.

Fire Prevention and Control

SLH manages fire prevention and control to at least the minimum standards required by legislation. These standards are implemented by the Compliance Manager and monitored by the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager.

All arrangements for fire prevention and control are contained in the Fire, Legionella and Radon Policy Statement. This statement also establishes the FLR safety group that meet biennially.

Training in Fire Prevention and Control

Training sessions will be arranged for employees on fire prevention and control where appropriate.

Visitors and the Public

All reasonable action will be taken to ensure that visitors are accompanied in premises and properties owned or managed by SLH where risks are known to exist, or visitors are made aware of such risks by briefing or appropriate signage.

SLH will conduct its undertakings in such a way as to ensure that members of the public are not endangered by work carried out by its employees.

First Aid Service

SLH provides first aid services and facilities to at least the minimum standards required by legislation. These standards are monitored by the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager.

Arrangements for training in First Aid for employees shall be made through Human Resources. Details are contained in the Welfare, PPE, DSE, Noise and First Aid Policy Statement.

Safety Representatives and Safety Committees

SLH will consult with recognised trade unions and employee safety representatives on Health, Safety and Welfare issues through Safety Committees and other meetings as appropriate.

Such consultation and negotiation is to take place, where practicable, in good time and using existing procedures to ensure effective consultation on matters that affect the Health, Safety and Welfare of the employees they represent.

SLH's Health, Safety and Welfare Committee was established to enable management and staff to bring matters of health, safety and welfare to each other's attention and to formally adopt a method of education and training. It monitors our safety performance and activities and promotes a 'Safety First' Culture. It is time tabled to meet every eight weeks.

Contractors on our premises or working on our behalf

All contractors are required to submit their Health, Safety and Welfare policies and documentation prior to being appointed on the approved contractors list.

All officers appointing contractors should ensure that the contractors' competency to carry out the appointed task has been checked.

All contractors are required to carry out a risk assessment of any significant hazards and this should be the subject of pre-contract and subsequent liaison.

On-site Communication - contract work involving occupied premises carries a dual responsibility. Employees organising such work should ensure there is effective liaison between the contractor and the custodians of any workplaces affected. All parties involved should understand their responsibilities in relation to health and safety.

Building Custodian Responsibilities

Building custodians must inform contractors of any known Health, Safety and Welfare risks that they might encounter during the course of the work, along with any arrangements in force to reduce the risks, e.g. fire procedures for the building, asbestos data.

Lone working

Managers and staff must comply with the Lone-working Policy

[HRPOL24 -Lone-working-.docx](#)

Help and Advice

Any employee can obtain help and advice on all aspects of occupational Health, Safety and Welfare from the Health, Safety and Welfare Manager.

HandSAdvice@southlakeshousing.co.uk

4.3 Enforcement

External

The enforcement of health and safety legislation is split between the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities (LA's).

In general, HSE covers factories, building sites, mines and quarries, farms, fairgrounds, railways, chemical plant and offshore and nuclear installations.

LA's cover offices, shops, warehouses, hotel and catering, sport, leisure, consumer services (e.g. launderettes, hairdressers, undertakers, shoe repair, tyre and exhaust fitters), residential care homes and churches.

In addition to providing published information and verbal advice, the enforcement methods available to HSE and LA inspectors include;

- providing written information regarding breaches of law,
- requiring improvements in the way risks are managed (application of an improvement notice),
- stopping certain activities where they create serious risks (application of a prohibition notice), and
- recommending and bringing, prosecutions where there has been a serious breach of law.

HSE and LA inspectors work to a single enforcement policy statement.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse41.pdf>

Internal

The Actions SLH will take to ensure effective enforcement of this policy are to:

- Provide awareness/competence training to appropriate levels.
- Regularly audit performance and compliance through; established internal auditing process, auditing of documentary evidence and recording systems, shadowing or visiting of working processes by the Health and Safety Manager, Investigating incident/accident reports.
- Escalating, as appropriate, to senior/executive management any reported or observed breaches of policy expectations.

5. Monitoring & Review

Adherence to this policy will be monitored by the SLH Health & Safety Manager. Implementation is also monitored by the internal SLH Staff Health & Safety Committee. The notes of these meetings are reported to the SLH Audit & Risk Committee.

The performance of Health, Safety and Welfare is reported to the quarterly performance meetings of the Executive and Senior Management Team.

The Audit and Risk Committee monitoring of Health Safety and Welfare performance via a quarterly 'compliance' report, including a dashboard and series of 'deep dives' into areas of compliance. The Audit and Risk Committee approves an annual Internal Audit Plan which involves receiving assurance on Health Safety and Welfare compliance. The Audit and Risk Committee also monitors the implementation of Internal Audit reports throughout the year and commissioning an annual 'follow-up' review.

The Board receives quarterly performance and risk reports, including exception reporting on Health & Safety. The Board also receives an Annual Health and Safety Report, from the Health and Safety Manager.

This policy will be reviewed by the Audit & Risk Committee once per annum, in line with the 'terms of reference'. The Policy may also be reviewed sooner where there is a need to address operational issues, or where best practice has evolved or where there has been a recommendation arising from an audit.