



Electrical Systems Testing Policy

1 - Introduction

- 1.1 The health and safety of residents, colleagues, contractors and other users of its buildings is of paramount importance to Irwell Valley Home (IVH).
- 1.2 In fulfilling these health and safety obligations, IVH is committed to mitigating the risks posed by the use of electrical systems within buildings it owns and controls. This policy sets out the specific guidance to ensure the safety of fixed electrical installations, lightning protection installations and portable appliances (where applicable) in properties owned and managed by IVH. Installations in dwellings owned and managed by IVH are to be installed, maintained and serviced to required standards and inspected at appropriate intervals to minimise the risk of electrocution, fire, damage to property, injury and or death.

2 - Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 IVH is a responsible social landlord and will minimise the risks associated with electrical safety and ensure that all our electrical safety duties are carried out.
- 2.2 This policy aims to ensure that we meet our obligations as a landlord and seeks to provide assurance that electrical safety is adequately managed, ensuring the safety of our tenants, leaseholders and the general public. It applies to all common areas, general needs and supported housing properties owned or managed by IVH
- 2.3 The policy has been developed to guide and support IVH’s employees in the safe management of electrical safety
- 2.4 The purpose of this policy and its supporting documents is to:-
 - Set out in a clear and precise manner, IVH’s policy on electrical safety within all of its buildings as part of its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
 - Ensure there is an adequate and effective control of electrical safety throughout the Company’s premises in order to minimise the risks associated with electrical safety;
 - Minimise the risk of harm and loss of life to residents, staff and contractors from possible lightning strikes to its blocks of flats as required;
 - Ensure all relevant personnel are adequately trained in practices and procedures with respect to electrical safety;
 - Provide clear lines of responsibilities for the management of electrical safety.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 1 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

2.5 The main objectives of this policy are to:

- Set out a clear approach for the maintenance and upgrading of electrical installations.
- Ensure a prompt, efficient and cost-effective electrical installation, repair, servicing and inspection service.
- Ensure our legal compliance relating to electrical installations, Portable appliances and lightning protection.
- Promote good practice.
- Ensure remedial works are carried out within appropriate timescales so that homes remain safe and electrical installations are maintained to a high standard.
- Comply with all the relevant statutory requirements relating to lightning protection systems.
- Detail a comprehensive electrical inspection and monitoring system.
- Ensure adequate records and quality monitoring systems are implemented.

2.6 The identified risks include:

- Electrical shock.
- Electrical burn.
- Fires of electrical origin.
- Electric arcing.
- Explosion initiated or caused by electricity.
- Electrical fire

2.7 IVH will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements in meeting its responsibilities to ensure electrical safety in buildings it owns or manages.

2.8 To meet the above requirements, IVH will operate a well-resourced and comprehensive electrical safety management system including checking and certification of all electrical systems and equipment that IVH is responsible for.

2.9 IVH will ensure the contractors it employs to carry out checks on its electrical systems are **'skilled persons (electronically)' who have the appropriate and up to date qualifications** i.e. Technical Qualification in Electrical Engineering, City & Guilds 236 parts 1 and 2 or **NVQ3 equivalent, City & Guilds 2381 or 2382 18th edition 'wiring regulations', City & Guilds 2391** or equivalent for testing and inspection and 2.3 PAT 2377, where required.

Record Keeping & Access

3.1 IVH will keep accurate records of all periodic checks undertaken on:

- Portable Appliance Testing in its offices and other work locations.
- Portable Appliance Testing in communal areas and furnished tenancies of domestic

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 2 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021	Next Review Date: September 2023	

properties.

- Machinery and Plant testing in work locations (to be determined by a risk assessment).
- Fixed wiring systems in domestic properties.
- Fixed wiring systems in communal areas of purpose-built blocks of flats.
- Fixed wiring systems within shops and other commercial properties.
- Fixed wiring systems within industrial properties (e.g. warehouse).
- New electrical installations in domestic properties.
- Lightning Protection installed on IVH's buildings.

3.2 IVH is not legally obliged to provide as a matter of course Domestic Electrical Installation Condition Reports to tenants (undertaken on all domestic properties when they are undergoing void works in between lettings) but will, however, provide copies on request.

3.3 IVH will adopt a 'fair but firm' approach to gaining access to domestic properties where periodical electrical testing is required, whilst working towards achieving Electrical Safety Council Guidelines for once every 5 years for tenanted properties in accordance with the Landlord and Tenant Act. This will include:

- Writing to tenants in advance of the required access date and providing an initial appointment (which can be altered on request).
- Partnership work with external agencies and advocacy groups where tenants are known to be vulnerable for any reason.
- Where possible combining appointments with other safety checks e.g. annual landlords gas safety checks, to reduce disruption to customers.

Scope

4.1 An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical wiring and equipment that is supplied from the point of the electricity meter and beyond. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the fabric of the building (walls, floors and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs).

4.2 This policy covers repair, upgrading, testing and inspection of all electrical installations. All electrical repairs, upgrades and renewals will be categorized to ensure that the correct levels of priority are given. We will take specific account of any vulnerability or health and safety requirements during the prioritisation process for these works. The Policy also covers any portable equipment owned by the organisation.

4.3 Electrical systems will be repaired, renewed, upgraded and tested in accordance with industry guidance and manufacturers' recommendations.

4.4 Typical installations and systems covered include.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 3 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

- Domestic electrical installation.
 - Communal landlord installations.
 - Portable electrical appliances owned by the organisation.
 - Lightning Protection installed on IVH's buildings.
- 4.5 The inspections will be completed by a competent person and records of each inspection are kept in relation to the above.
- 4.6 The frequency of inspections and procedures will be detailed within the Electrical Safety Management Plan.
- 4.7 The policy relates to dwellings, offices, general needs, supported housing, sheltered housing, extra care schemes, other rented properties owned by IVH, communal areas including leasehold properties, other rented properties managed by third parties unless other third parties are explicitly specified for statutory responsibility in the lease or management agreement and shops and commercial premises (where IVH retain responsibility).
- 4.8 Where properties are managed on behalf of external property owners' statutory responsibility will be detailed in the terms of the management agreement.

Responsibility

- 5.1 The Chief Executive of IVH is responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy.
- 5.2 The Chief Executive recognises they are the Duty Holder in relation to the Management of Electrical Safety.
- 5.3 The Duty Holder will ensure there are the necessary resources, skills, training and authority to ensure that electrical safety is managed effectively.
- 5.4 The Executive Director Growth, Development and Assets will monitor the application of the Policy and ensure that it is consistently applied.
- 5.5 Managers are responsible for ensuring that colleagues, contractors, casual workers and other non-permanent colleagues working in the company are aware of the terms of the Policy.
- 5.6 All colleagues have a responsibility to be aware of the IVH Electrical Policy to be able to direct any customer enquiries that may arise. Colleagues also need to be aware of the Policy to fulfil their health and safety duties, "to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do".
- 5.7 All colleagues are responsible for ensuring adherence to the policy and for reporting any breaches to the Compliance Manager, who will in turn report to the Health & Safety Manager and wider organisation through the Health & Safety Committee. This includes any RIDDOR reportable incidents.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 4 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

- 5.8 The Compliance team will be responsible for ensuring the schedule of inspection is completed and the Planned Surveyors team are responsible for operational delivery and management of the planned programme Contractor.
- 5.9 The Compliance team will work with the nominated Planned Surveyor to instruct and review audits which will be carried out by an independent Consultant.
- 5.10 All parties, colleagues and contractors are required to co-operate as far as is necessary to allow the Duty Holder to comply with the above requirements.

Performance Indicators/Targets/Standards

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years (or more frequently in the event of a change in legislation) to reflect:
 - Operational and legislative changes.
 - Lessons learnt from experience.
 - Feedback from colleagues and customers.
- 6.2 Any reviews will involve consultation with key stakeholders including relevant consultants, the Homes team and other key colleagues.
- 6.3 Performance against compliance will be monitored by the Board on a quarterly basis.
- 6.4 IVH will carry out a Domestic Electrical Condition Report on all void properties by a qualified electrician, ensuring all electrical systems and any supplied equipment is safe for use before making the property available for re-letting. Information from these reports and other aggregated property condition information will also be used to inform future investment works including scheduled re-wiring of properties.
- 6.5 Copies of the Domestic Electrical Condition Reports will be retained by IVH as proof of the fitness for purpose of electrical systems at the time of letting.
- 6.6 IVH will also carry out a Domestic Electrical Condition Report when there is a transfer of tenancy from one party to another but there is no vacant void period (this will not apply when there is a transfer from a single to a joint or joint to a single tenancy).
- 6.7 As a minimum specification, IVH will ensure that domestic properties, at the time of letting:
 - Have an electrical system that is safe for continued use.
 - Keep supplied appliances to a minimum.
 - Ensure that where supplied appliances are provided, tenants have a copy of the manufacturer’s operating instructions and safety warnings are attached including CE marked and/or approved.
 - Ensure that where appliances are provided, flexes are in good order and properly attached

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 5 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

to appliances and plugs.

- Ensure that earth tags are in place.
- Ensure that where appliances are provided, plugs are of an approved type, CE marked and have a sleeved live, and neutral pin.
- Ensure that plugs provided and sockets conform to BS1363 or BS1363/A for heavy duty uses;
- Ensure that all fuses in appliances provided are of the correct type and rating.
- Make sure that tenants know the location of and have access to the main consumer unit, fuses and isolator switch.

6.8 Following guidance from the Electrical Safety Council, IVH will work towards carrying out a periodic check of fixed wiring systems within domestic properties every 5 years.

6.9 Where access is denied, IVH may consider the use of legal powers within the tenancy agreement to enforce access if operatives working on behalf of IVH consider there to be a significant risk to the occupants or the property by not carrying out the electrical check. Each case will be assessed on its merits and any final decision to instigate legal action to gain access will be made by the appropriate Head of Service.

6.10 If a property is suspected to be abandoned, IVH will deal with it in line with its Suspected Abandoned Procedure.

6.11 Where IVH carry out works to electrical systems in domestic properties that will be classed as 'new installations', 'additional' or an 'alteration' e.g. where a complete rewire is required or a new consumer unit installed, it will ensure Electrical Installation Certificates (EIC's) or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWC's) are issued and retained.

6.12 Where IVH has installed new electrical systems (i.e. a complete rewire) in domestic properties, it will carry out periodic electrical testing after 5 years or at change of occupancy (whichever comes first), and thereafter, every 5 years from the last date of inspection. Periodic electrical testing may be completed sooner if required by changes in legislation or regulation affecting electrical safety, or if issues are identified with a property on inspection for other purposes e.g. tenancy audit where electrical safety concerns are raised.

6.13 IVH are working towards carrying out fixed wire testing of all electrical systems in communal parts of domestic accommodation it owns and manages once every 5 years. Any systems designed to ensure fire safety within buildings will be subject to more frequent testing (every three years for fixed wire testing of emergency lighting and every 12 - 18 months for fire alarm systems and in line with regular routine system testing in accordance with BS 5839 2013 requirements).

6.14 Where IVH supplies electrical equipment, either for use in communal areas or as part of furnished tenancies, Portable Appliance Testing will also be conducted on a risk assessment basis and IVH will ensure appropriate labelling is clearly displayed at the point of testing.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 6 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

- 6.15 In order to comply with the British Standards BSEN 62305 or BS EN 62305 if newly installed or upgraded. IVH will inspect, test and certify all lightning conductors installed on buildings it owns or controls, every twelve months.
- 6.16 IVH residents 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.
- 6.17 IVH encourages residents 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 available via the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk). Where any doubt exists over the safety of any equipment, they should inform IVH immediately by contacting us on 0300 561 1111. IVH will treat any faults with the electrical supply as an emergency job and respond within 24 hours (within two hours if there is a threat to health and safety) and endeavour to attend within 10 working days for non-emergency jobs.
- 6.18 IVH residents have a responsibility not to tamper with any electrical systems supplied as part of their tenancy and should follow IVH's 'Request to Alter' procedures for any changes required to the system (this will involve contacting us to obtain a form which they need to complete, prior to any works).
- 6.19 IVH will ensure the safety of its employees from electrical dangers, in office locations, by instructing trained electricians to carry out Portable Appliance Testing on all portable electrical equipment, every 2 years.
- 6.20 IVH will also, as part of a general health and safety awareness training for all colleagues, provide information on the safe use of electrical equipment in and around office locations, including the safe storage of cabling, avoidance of trip hazards and dangers posed by liquid spills around electrical equipment and systems.

Current Legislation

- 7.1 This Policy sets out IVH's responsibilities to comply with the relevant legislation and regulatory guidance on the installation, inspection, repairs, testing and certification of electrical systems in buildings it owns and controls including:
 - The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
 - The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
 - Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
 - The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IEE) Wiring Regulations 18th Edition, BS 7671.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 7 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Defective Premises Act 1972.
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.
- Building Regulations (including Part P requirements).
- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.
- BS EN/IEC 62305 Lightning Protection Standard.
- The Consumer Protection Act 1987

7.2 The regulations impose requirements on Duty Holders in respect of systems, electrical equipment and conductors, plus work activities on or near electrical equipment.

7.3 The Company must ensure that customers, residents, employees and visitors to all our premises, both individual homes and offices remain safe around electrical equipment

7.4 The Policy ensures the safety of fixed electrical installations, portable appliances where appropriate, and lightning protection installations in dwellings owned and managed by IVH are to be installed, maintained and serviced to required standards and inspected at appropriate intervals to minimise the risk of electrocution, fire, damage to property, injury and or death.

7.5 Failure to comply with the requirements may result in:

- Prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Prosecution under Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- RSH Serious detriment judgement, resulting in a Governance Downgrade. Leading to a loss of confidence by stakeholders in the organisation.
- Damage to the reputation of IVH.

7.6 Application of the Policy also enables IVH to meet the requirements of the Home Standard as regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing as follows:

- Provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

8.1 Irwell Valley Homes is committed to treating people with honesty, dignity, respect, and trust. This applies to colleagues, customers potential customers, contractors, and Board Members. At IVH:

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 8 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

- Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
- Diversity is recognising difference and responding positively to those differences.
- Inclusion is about creating an environment where our services and employment opportunities are accessible to all.

8.2 IVH will be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 in all its actions and will consider all the protected characteristics of the Act which are: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Age, Marriage/Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly. Further to the protected characteristics, IVH will be mindful of socio-economic disadvantage and will do everything in its power to minimise this and other forms of disadvantage.

Cross Reference Documents/Good Practice

9.1 This policy is supported by:

- The IVH Electrical Systems Testing Procedure.
- Health and Safety Procedural Documents.
- Letting/Void Property Policy
- Repairs Policy

9.2 Further information on Electrical Safety at Work can be found using these links.

- Electrical Safety First <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/>

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 9 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021		Next Review Date: September 2023

Appendix 1

Background

Electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property. Every year many accidents involving electric shock or burns are reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Electric shocks can be fatal or non-fatal. Non-fatal shocks can cause severe and permanent injury.

The main hazards are identified as being:

- Contact with live parts (often at normal mains voltage);
- Faults leading to a fire; and
- Fire or explosion where electricity was the source of ignition in a flammable atmosphere.

These can occur through:

- The electrical installation and equipment deteriorating over time.
- Damage to switches, sockets and other equipment (perhaps through vandalism).
- Misuse of the installation and equipment; and
- Poor maintenance of the installation.

IVH Electrical Systems Testing Policy	Author Victoria Leonard – Compliance Manager. Helen Nicholson - Executive Director (Finance, Governance & Investments)	Page 10 of 10
Approved by/when: Leadership Team September 2021	Next Review Date: September 2023	