

# Health and Safety Policy



## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

### Introduction and Statement of Intent

Warrington Housing Association (the Association) is committed to managing health and safety in all aspects of its work and to implementing reasonably practicable measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of colleagues and any other people that may be affected by its work.

This policy covers colleagues, customers, visitors, contractors and members of the public who come into contact with the Association and its activities. It applies to all premises and activities within the control of Warrington Housing Association and is available to interested parties on request.

Warrington Housing Association is committed to preventing injury and ill health, with on-going improvement in occupational health and safety and performance. The Association will, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Ensure the environment is safe for all colleagues, customers, visitors or contractors whenever they are on Warrington Housing Association premises, or while on Association business.
- Ensure compliance with legal/ statutory and any other appropriate requirements are adhered to throughout our business and activities.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to enable colleagues to perform their work safely.
- Provide and maintain safe equipment as appropriate.
- Provide safe systems of work as appropriate.
- Provide suitable protective equipment and supervise its use.
- Provide and maintain suitable welfare facilities for colleagues.
- Carry out risk assessments and adopt suitable control measures.
- Ensure that contractors (and sub-contractors) and suppliers are committed to achieving and adhering to the standards of health and safety detailed in this policy
- Ensure that individuals are aware of their obligation to co-operate with Warrington Housing Association to achieve their duties, obligations and statutory requirements.
- Promote personal responsibility to all colleagues to avoid and prevent risks to the health and safety of themselves and others that may occur as a result of their acts or omissions and encourage the reporting of near misses and cause for concerns.
- Provide means of consultation on health and safety matters for all colleagues.
- Monitor, maintain and amend as necessary all relevant policies, procedures and systems relating to the health, safety and welfare of colleagues.

Warrington Housing Association requires its colleagues to take reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions while at work, and to abide by the Associations policies.

**SIGNED:**            **David Cummins, Chief Executive**

**Michele Scattergood, Chair of the Board**

**DATED:** 20.05.2026

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## Objectives

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure the safety of colleagues, customers, visitors, contractors and members of the public.
- Detail Warrington Housing Association's commitment to establishing and maintaining an occupational health and safety management system.
- Continuously improve and embed a positive health and safety culture across the Association.
- Embed a proactive, risk-based approach to health, safety and wellbeing management.

## Compliance with Regulatory Standards and Legal Obligations

Warrington Housing Association (WHA) is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The application of this policy ensures compliance with the regulatory framework for social housing in England which requires all registered providers to 'meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes'.

WHA recognises the requirement to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Construction (Design & Management) Regulations (CDM 2015), The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, The Fire Safety Act 2021, The Building Safety Act 2023 and all other associated legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and guidance.

The Association recognises that regulatory expectations increasingly require demonstrable evidence of compliance, and will ensure that health and safety arrangements are supported by clear, auditable records.

It is essential we ensure customers, tenants and residents, colleagues, contractors and visitors remain safe in our premises (both individual homes and offices), failure to properly discharge our legal responsibilities may result in:

- Prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Prosecution under Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- Prosecution under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Intervention by the Regulator of Social Housing
- Reputational damage
- Loss of confidence by stakeholders in the organisation
- Increase in civil/compensation claims for breach of duty of care.

## Compliance with National Advice and Guidance

Our approach to agile working will follow correct guidance/best working practice in respect of H&S, ensuring we comply with all Government guidance.

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## Scope

The Health and Safety Policy details how the Association will achieve and demonstrate its commitment to occupational health and safety and establishing and implementing suitable and sufficient safety arrangements.

The Association recognises its duty of care extends to all working environments, including home and remote working locations. Suitable and sufficient risk assessments (including Display Screen Equipment assessments) will be undertaken, and appropriate equipment, guidance and management oversight provided.

## Accountability and Responsibility

Organisational arrangements are in place to ensure the clear allocation of responsibilities within the Association and that the objectives of this policy are fulfilled.

Managers are responsible for promoting a positive health and safety culture, including proactively identifying risks, addressing concerns raised by colleagues, and embedding health and safety considerations into day-to-day decision making.

### *Board of Management*

The Board of Management is responsible for monitoring compliance with the health and safety management system and associated health and safety policies. In order to achieve this, the Board will review and approve this policy on an annual basis, review health and safety performance through the quarterly Assurance Report and ensure that any issues of significant risk are actioned appropriately. The Board has a collective role for championing health, safety and welfare standards within the Association and has appointed a Health and Safety Board Sponsor.

### *Chief Executive*

The Chief Executive is ultimately accountable for the control and implementation of this policy at all levels of the organisation and the provision of adequate resources to meet health and safety requirements. The Chief Executive will:

- Provide leadership to encourage colleagues to be safety conscious at all times.
- Ensure that responsibility for the implementation of, and compliance with, this policy is properly assigned and accepted by the Senior Management Team and colleagues under their control.
- Appoint competent health and safety representatives to co-ordinate health and safety matters within the Association.
- Ensure that adequate financial and human resources are available to maintain standards.

### *The Senior Management Team, chaired by the Chief Executive will:*

- Bring this policy to the attention of colleagues under their management and ensure an understanding of its contents.
- Ensure that key tasks, work activities and work areas are subject to risk assessment to determine suitable controls to eliminate or manage risk.
- Ensure that colleagues within their departments are suitably trained, competent and fully understand their health and safety obligations.

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- Support colleagues by providing effective resources and advice to ensure standards of health and safety are achieved.
- Monitor the activities of their departments in relation to the health and safety to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, good practice, policies and procedures.
- Undertake hazard identification and related risk assessments for their areas of control and introduce and maintain suitable and sufficient control measures.
- Issue Personal Protective Equipment when identified as a requirement in risk assessments and train colleagues in its use and maintenance.
- Ensure that all new colleagues are properly inducted into the organisation, including an awareness of precautions and procedures applicable to their role and workplace.
- Ensure awareness of and adherence to the lone working policy for all applicable colleagues.
- Ensure that colleagues are not permitted to carry out any kind of hazardous task before they have received adequate training and instruction.
- Ensure all accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences and hazards are reported as soon as is reasonably practicable and investigated where appropriate, including notifying the HSE if required.
- Ensure that any legal requirements relating to the operation of their department or team are fully complied with.
- Ensure that any health and safety responsibilities delegated to colleagues are clearly understood.
- Ensure contractors (and sub-contractors) appointed to carry out works on behalf of the Association are made aware of health and safety policies and procedures, are notified of known hazards and carry out their work without risk to others.
- Regularly review and develop WHA's health and safety policies and procedures to ensure they are relevant to, and inclusive of, the hazards facing the business.
- Advice from relevant bodies, for example specialist independent risk assessors or insurance companies, will be sought as and when necessary.

### *Colleagues at all levels of the organisation*

In addition to the duties outlined in the Health and Safety Policy Statement, all colleagues will:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and all health and safety policies, procedures, risk assessments and method statements relevant to their role and workplace.
- Attend mandatory health and safety training courses as and when necessary.
- Report all accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences and hazards to their manager as soon as is practicably possible.
- Contribute and co-operate with the Association on all matters of health and safety.
- Be aware of the effects of their work on colleagues, tenants and residents, members of the public and contractors and ensure they do not create or compound hazards or endanger others by their actions.
- Carry out their duties using safe working practices, with regard to themselves, their colleagues, tenants and residents, members of the public and contractors.
- Report any matters they consider to be a danger to health and safety to their line manager as soon as is practicably possible. This includes any deficiencies or shortcomings they

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have identified within this policy and the Association's arrangements for the management of health and safety.

- Use Personal Protective Equipment appropriate for the task and maintain the equipment in reasonable repair, including reporting losses or defects to their line manager as soon as is practicably possible.
- Not to interfere, tamper or misuse any item provided for health, safety or welfare purposes.
- Use only the tools, equipment and plant they are trained to use and that which is appropriate to the task.
- Refrain from using, and report to their line manager, any defective or damaged tools, plant or equipment.
- Report any health condition that affects their ability to work safely to their line manager and the Head of Corporate Services as soon as is practicably possible.
- Use safe systems of work for tasks relating to electricity, gas installations, the handling of chemicals, the use of dangerous equipment, manual handling and repetitive tasks and any other activities that present a significant risk to health and safety.
- Drive safely at all times whilst undertaking company business.
- Immediately liaise with their line manager and the Head of Corporate Services if they are faced with a conflict between health and safety and the demands of their job.

### **Failure to comply**

Failure to comply with this policy could result in disciplinary action and dismissal.

### **Contractors**

Independent contractors are responsible for health and safety within their organisations. However, the Association will endeavour to support independent contractors with regard to health and safety requirements.

Contractors working on Association premises will be required to:

- Conduct their work to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that other persons are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.
- Ensure that all plant, equipment and machinery complies with the relevant regulations.
- Comply with working rules, which must be made clear to them when tendering for work and provide evidence of insurance, accreditations, training, risk assessments and method statements as requested. Copies of relevant safety-related procedures will be supplied to them prior to the commencement of work.
- Report on arrival to the department manager or other identified officer to be informed of any hazards; and
- Report all injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences (occurring on Association premises).
- Ensure their activities do not cause harm to any of the Association's colleagues or customers.

To ensure our contractors are meeting the above expectations WHA will undertake regular on-site spot checks of our contractors and their working practices. These checks will be recorded and discussed at contractor performance meeting.

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## Control of Hazards

The Association has identified the health and safety hazards relevant to the business, assessed the risks and implemented the control measures required to reduce or eliminate them.

## Health and Safety Policies

There are a suite of associated health and safety policies in place, with hazards and control measures detailed in the respective policies. Policy owners are responsible for day-to-day implementation and for carrying out regular reviews to take account of alterations to legislation, industry best practice or changes within the organisation. Policies will be supported by procedures as and when necessary.

## Customer Safety

WHA takes the safety of our customers very seriously. We have a suite of policies and management plans aimed at ensuring the safety of our customers within their homes, along with our compliance with relevant legislation designed to protect our people and properties, they are reviewed regularly and detailed below:

- Asbestos Management Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Gas- Heating Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy
- Water Hygiene Policy

In addition to the above, The Gateway and its facilities and services also falls within the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn' Law and have in place a guide in which WHA will meet these legal requirements.

## Occupational Health and Inclusive Wellbeing

In order to ensure that risks to the health of colleagues arising from work activities are properly controlled, the Association will:

- Identify where reasonable adjustments are required to support newly recruited or existing colleagues, including those with neurodiverse conditions, in line with Equality Act 2010 requirements.
- Ensure procedures are in place to detect and address occupational ill health, apply suitable control measures, and monitor their effectiveness over time.
- Access expert advice on occupational health risks and preventative approaches tailored to the needs of the organisation and individual colleagues.

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- Support colleagues in returning to, and remaining in, work following injury or ill health, through appropriate case management and access to Occupational Health services.
- Promote general health and well-being through ongoing communication on lifestyle, mental health, and non-work-related risks, with the aim of reducing avoidable health problems.
- Mental health and wellbeing risks will be proactively identified, assessed and managed in line with the Association's risk management approach.

WHA is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment for all colleagues, including those who are **neurodivergent** – such as individuals with autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's syndrome, and other cognitive differences. While these conditions are not caused by work, we recognise that the working environment, tasks, communication styles, and systems can present barriers if not properly considered.

As part of our approach, WHA will actively work with a range of **specialist organisations** – such as the British Dyslexia Association, the National Autistic Society, the ADHD Foundation, and other relevant bodies to conduct diagnostic and environmental assessments. These initiatives will inform our broader inclusive practices, including the use of assistive technologies, workspace adaptations, and awareness training to further enhance our understanding and ensure the workplace enables all neurodivergent colleagues to thrive.

We will continue to develop our internal policies, practices, and manager training to ensure that neurodiversity is not only accommodated but embraced as a valuable aspect of workforce diversity.

WHA recognises that inappropriate behaviours, including bullying, harassment and sexual harassment, can present significant risks to colleague wellbeing, psychological safety and organisational culture. The organisation is committed to taking proactive steps to prevent such behaviours, ensure concerns can be raised safely, and respond appropriately and promptly where issues arise.

## Competence, Tools, Plant and Equipment

The tools, plant, and equipment provided by the Association for work activities will meet all relevant legal and regulatory requirements. To ensure safety and effective use:

- Colleagues will be trained, instructed, and supervised in the correct and safe use of tools, plant, and equipment.
- Formal operating procedures will be developed and communicated where appropriate.
- Equipment will be maintained in safe working order in accordance with statutory inspection and maintenance requirements.
- The Association will ensure that all colleagues, particularly those in safety-critical roles, are competent to carry out their duties. Competence will be defined, assessed and maintained through appropriate training, experience and ongoing professional development.

## Monitoring

To support continuous improvement in health and safety performance, WHA will apply both active and reactive monitoring techniques:

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- Active monitoring includes audits, workplace inspections, assessments, statutory testing, and preventative maintenance programmes.
- Reactive monitoring involves reviewing incidents, accidents, near misses, and complaints to identify causes and improve controls.
- The Association will ensure that health and safety arrangements are supported by clear, auditable evidence, including records of training, risk assessments, actions taken and outcomes achieved.

Monitoring will also be used to assess the effectiveness of workplace adjustments and occupational health interventions, particularly those implemented to support neurodiverse colleagues or those returning from long-term sickness absence.

## Communication and Engagement

The Association is committed to effective communication on health and safety matters. We will:

- Share relevant information, lessons learned, and updates to legislation or guidance with all colleagues via organisational and team meetings.
- Consult with colleagues on key health and safety issues either directly or via elected representatives, such as the Colleague Forum or designated Health & Safety representatives.
- The Association will foster a culture where colleagues feel safe to raise health and safety concerns without fear of detriment, and all concerns will be taken seriously, investigated appropriately and responded to in a timely and transparent manner.

## Key Health and Safety Documentation

The Health and Safety Policy will be displayed in all workplaces, made available via the intranet, and issued to all new colleagues during induction.

- The HSE Health and Safety Law poster will be prominently displayed in each workplace.
- The Association will appoint, and train designated First Aiders, Mental Health First Aiders, and Fire Wardens, ensuring their roles are clearly understood and maintained in line with organisational needs.

## Equality Diversity & Inclusion

An EqIA has been completed and found this policy supports positive outcomes for equality and inclusion across the organisation. In particular, the integration of occupational health and inclusive wellbeing principles provides additional support for colleagues with long-term health conditions and neurodiverse traits. No adverse impacts were identified.

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