



Women's Pioneer Housing

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1. Introduction

1.1 Our residents and others could be affected by a major incident in or near one of our properties and this policy describes our approach to ensuring the safety of residents and others ensuring that homes and services are restored to working order as quickly as possible.

1.2 A major incident is considered to be an incident in or near to the home which affects the residents' ability to access or live safely in their home and may include but is not restricted to

- Fire, flood, leakage of toxic material
- Failure of essential services
- Failure of major building components
- Terrorism related event

1.3 A major incident may occur that does not render homes uninhabitable but nevertheless requires some of the actions outlined in this policy and the associated procedures.

1.4 If a major incident occurs we will work with the emergency and security services, statutory and voluntary agencies and the local authority if involved, to ensure that residents are safe, kept informed and assisted throughout. We will work to ensure a speedy resumption of safe access to homes and/or services at the earliest possible opportunity.

2. Finding out about the incident

2.1 Residents, staff in the area or members of the public including emergency services can alert us using the office telephone number on our website or publicised to residents in our newsletter. For out of hours incidents, residents can use the number of an emergency contractor that we have made available (residents in sheltered housing can alert the Community Alarm Service). Both the emergency contractor and the Community Alarm Service hold contact numbers for and are able to contact members of the Extended Management Team out of hours should an incident potentially deemed to be a major incident occur.

3. Immediate response

3.1 The manager receiving the initial report will decide whether to categorise the event as a major incident. In this case the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

3.2 A member of the management team will be appointed as controller who will co-ordinate our response and assign tasks to appropriate staff members.

This may include

- Obtaining information
- Organising immediate making safe works
- Organising remedial works
- Providing information to residents and other stakeholders
- Dealing with press enquiries
- Arranging for alternative accommodation via ICAB
- Notifying insurers and liaising with the incident team they will set up.

3.3 If the incident happens out of hours communication between managers will mainly be via a WhatsApp group set up for this purpose and in use or by conference calls.

4. Safety of Residents, staff and others.

4.1 Safety of residents is paramount. Actions to keep those directly affected safe from harm will be prioritised. This may mean emergency repairs to make safe, moving residents and staff to a place of safety and may involve contacting the emergency services.

4.2 Staff will be instructed not put themselves in danger in an attempt to help others.

4.3 If it appears that residents cannot remain in the property safely for we will provide alternative accommodation through our approved contractor ICAB or the local authority. Whilst this is being organised we will assist those affected to find somewhere safe to stay by making available our common rooms in

sheltered schemes or by asking the local authority or local voluntary agencies to help. We will pay residents reasonable expenses for travel and subsistence during this period.

5. Information provision

5.1 We will keep residents, staff and others such as neighbours informed both in the initial stages and throughout the incident. We will identify the most effective means of keeping people informed and providing reassurance. We will keep organisations informed, including statutory authorities, external service providers, the Social Housing Regulator, the press and our insurers.

6. Property safety

6.1 We maintain a panel of contractors who are able to attend in an emergency and these arrangements are reviewed regularly. We will ensure that property and services are made safe and restored to working order as quickly and efficiently as possible.

7. Declaring the major incident closed

7.1 At the point that residents are able to safely re-occupy their homes on a permanent basis or have been re-housed, the Controller will liaise with colleagues to declare that the major incident is closed. Staff and residents will be informed.

7.2 We will review all actions to learn from the incident and amend our procedures in the light of this learning.

8. Loss of amenity and service failure

8.1 We will assess whether payments are due to residents under our policy on loss of amenity and service failure.

8.2 The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Chief Executive but this is delegated to the Director of Housing.