



ORKNEY
ISLANDS COUNCIL



Fire Safety Policy 2025-2027

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Contents

Contents.....	2
1 Policy Statement.....	3
2 Organisation.....	4
Managers and Duty Holders.....	4
Council Staff.....	5
Visitors.....	6
Safety & Resilience Service.....	6
Fire Manager.....	6
Fire Stewards.....	6
Technical / Property.....	7
3 Arrangements.....	8
Emergency Plans / Premises Fire Policy / Fire Procedures.....	8
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP).....	8
Fire Safety Risk Assessments.....	8
Fire Prevention.....	9
Fire Fighting Access.....	9
Fire Protection and Support Services.....	10
Buildings Undergoing Refurbishment.....	10
Active Fire Protection.....	10
Fire-Fighting Equipment.....	10
Fire Safety Signage.....	10
Means of Escape Doors.....	11
Training.....	11
Fire Drills and Exercises.....	11
Contractors.....	11
Business Continuity.....	12
4 Monitoring and Review.....	13
Audit and Review.....	13
Records.....	13
Reporting of Incidents.....	13

1 Policy Statement

Orkney Islands Council (OIC) has a clearly defined corporate fire safety policy for the protection of all persons using premises owned and managed by the Council. The policy sets out the arrangements for the organisation, control, monitoring, and review of fire safety measures.

Orkney Islands Council's Fire Safety Policy requires to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of Council staff, service users, visiting members of the public and contractors working within Council premises, regarding the risk posed from fire. Orkney Islands Council is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 (as amended), Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 along with other relevant legislation. The Council is committed to providing and maintaining buildings that are safe from fire, through the effective management of their occupation. The Council's Fire Safety Policy is achieved through:

- ❖ The appointment of designated members of staff to be responsible for fire safety within the Council, who shall keep workplace fire safety procedures under constant review, liaise as necessary with the fire and rescue service and partner agencies, and report to Orkney Islands Council in respect of current and new legislation, statutory guidance, directives and regulations to ensure fire safety on Council premises.
- ❖ The appointment and / or training of persons with the necessary specialist knowledge and experience to provide competent fire safety advice and instruction.
- ❖ Encouraging staff representation through the appointment of individuals with responsibility for fire safety within the premises and by ensuring that adequate time and resources are available for them to receive necessary training and perform their duties effectively.
- ❖ Fire safety training for all new Council staff, followed by regular refresher training sessions; such training to include staffs' responsibilities to report all incidents related to fire safety, no matter how minor, and any weaknesses they believe to be present in the Fire Safety Policy, fire procedures or fire instructions.
- ❖ The utilisation of the Council's Health and Safety Committee as the vehicle for discussion and consultation on fire safety matters within Orkney Islands Council.
- ❖ The Fire Safety Policy shall be reviewed, and if necessary revised, biennially or following structural, equipment, staffing or work pattern changes within an area, or an incident investigation.

This policy applies equally to all Council employees regardless of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment status, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership or pregnancy or maternity status. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that no groups are adversely affected in implementing this policy.

2 Organisation

The Council's corporate Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Policy sets out the Organisational responsibilities of Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and staff in relation to all health and safety matters, including fire safety. Additional specific fire safety responsibilities are outlined below.

This Fire Safety Policy Statement is supported by premises fire safety policies and procedures, which detail the organisation and arrangements to ensure that the aims of this policy are met.

Managers and Duty Holders

Service Managers are responsible for the day-to-day management of fire safety matters within their respective areas of control. Support and advice on the administration of the Fire Safety Policy at all OIC premises will be provided by the Safety & Resilience Service.

Where Managers authorise the planning or execution of any work or activity, they must be aware of the possibility that the work or activity may affect fire safety through interruption of automatic fire detection/fire alarm systems or building fabric elements essential for fire safety. This includes work or activities by staff employed in the Service or by a contractor authorised by the Senior Maintenance Surveyor.

It is the responsibility of the Manager to consult as appropriate with the following Service Managers and Team Managers:

- ❖ Service Manager - Safety & Resilience
- ❖ Service Manager – Estates and Property Assets
- ❖ Service Manager - Property and Capital Projects
- ❖ Senior Maintenance Surveyor
- ❖ and relevant others in advance of action being taken.

A duty holder in the context of this Fire Safety Policy is defined as an individual with overall responsibility for premises (such as a Care Home Manager, Head Teacher, Depot Manager, Site Manager, etc). They are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of fire safety within their specific premises are effectively managed and compliant.

The role of the duty holder within each premises has the responsibilities for:

- ❖ **Engagement:** Promote a positive attitude towards Fire Safety to secure the effective implementation of the policy.
- ❖ **Risk Assessment:** Conduct through fire risk assessments and reviews to identify potential hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks within their premises.
- ❖ **Policy Development:** Prepare and record a fire policy and fire procedures, including an Emergency Fire Action Plan and a Fire Zone Plan for the premises under their control.
- ❖ **Fire Safety Equipment:** Ensure that appropriate fire safety equipment is in place, regularly inspected and maintained. Maintain a fire plan of the area detailing location of fire extinguishers, call points, fire doors and escape routes.
- ❖ **Fire Training and Awareness:** To include arranging the delivery of appropriate Fire Safety training. Appoint and train sufficient Fire Marshals, and Wardens. Organise, undertake, and record Fire and Emergency Drills.
- ❖ **Record Keeping:** Ensure the maintenance of records as required by relevant legislation.
- ❖ **Emergency Coordination:** Ensure the appointment of a Fire Manager and Fire Stewards (as appropriate) to co-ordinate staff in the event of a fire.
- ❖ **Reporting and Investigation:** Undertake agreed communication actions for reporting fire safety concerns or incidents. Investigate, in association with Safety & Resilience service, all fire incidents and report to the relevant bodies, as necessary, serious fire incidents.
- ❖ **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly review and update premise fire safety plans and procedures to adapt to changing conditions or regulations.

The duty holder for the premises has overall responsibility for implementing the OIC Fire Safety Policy and ensuring that their premises are legally compliant. The duty holder may assign roles to employees at the premises to assist with fire safety, for example the two key roles of Fire Manager and Fire Steward.

Council Staff

Council staff have a general responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their work activities, and to cooperate with each other and with the Council to ensure a healthy and safe work environment.

Regarding fire safety, all Council staff should:

- ❖ Familiarise themselves with and comply with the Council's Fire Safety Policy and with the fire precautions, policy, and procedures for their workplace.
- ❖ Never knowingly create any fire hazard by their work activities or behaviour.
- ❖ Inform their manager or supervisor of any work situation which might present any risk of fire.
- ❖ Take part in fire safety training to enable them to fully understand their roles, responsibilities and to effectively perform their duties under the Fire Safety Policy.
- ❖ Use all equipment, machinery, tools, substances, and safety devices, including personal protective equipment etc, in accordance with relevant procedures, manuals and training.

- ❖ Report immediately all outbreaks of fire, including “near misses,” to their manager or supervisor.
- ❖ Never interfere with or misuse any fire safety equipment.

Visitors

All visitors, service users, students, contractors etc must be made aware of and comply with the Council’s / premises Fire Precautions and Procedures.

Safety & Resilience Service

The Safety & Resilience Service provides fire safety advice, information, and guidance to all Services including:

- Monitoring OIC fire precautions and procedures.
- Engaging with duty holders to ensure the delivery of fire safety training.
- Provide support and guidance when requested by duty holders in the formulation of premises policies, procedures, and instructions.
- Regular review of premises Fire Safety Risk Assessment reviews and ensure the implementation of recommendations.
- The promotion of a positive fire safety culture to secure the effective implementation of the OIC Fire Safety Policy.
- To assist in investigations and reports following fire incidents.

Fire Manager

A Fire Manager will be appointed for each OIC premises. This role will in most circumstances be assigned to the duty holder or another nominated Manager. Where Fire Managers and Fire Stewards are nominated for each building, the Fire Manager has overall control of an emergency evacuation in the event of a fire. They shall undergo appropriate training to allow them to perform their duties as required. Their role shall include:

- ❖ Maintaining the Fire Log Book for the premises, including the reporting of all faults to the Senior Maintenance Surveyor.
- ❖ Organising, conducting and recording Fire Drills at a minimum of one every 6 months, ensuring that all staff assigned to the premises have attended at least one Fire Drill annually.
- ❖ Producing an Emergency Fire Action Plan, a Fire Zone Plan (displayed by the Fire Control Panel) and maintaining Fire Training Records.
- ❖ On the activation of the fire alarm, the Fire Manager will activate the Emergency Fire Action Plan and coordinate the evacuation of the premises.
- ❖ Organising an investigation into signs of fire when no fire is identified.
- ❖ Only the Fire Manager, on the authorisation of the emergency services, can allow re-entry to the building.

Fire Stewards

Fire Stewards, where deemed necessary, shall be nominated from all areas and shall undergo appropriate training to allow them to perform their duties as required. Where deployed, the role of the Fire Steward is to:

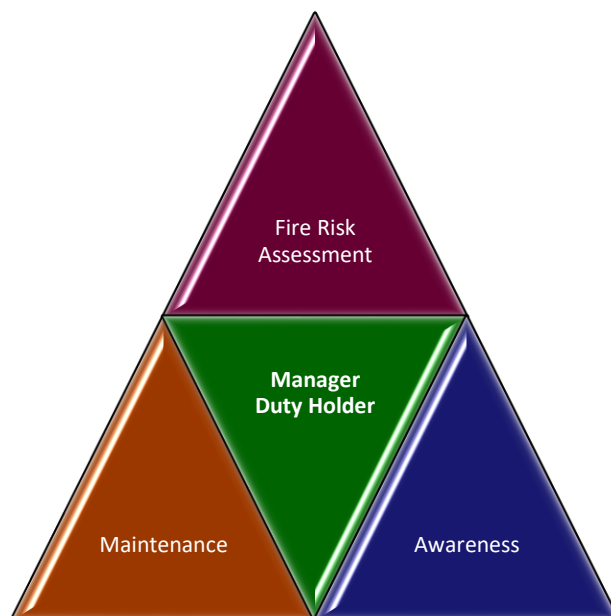
- ❖ Familiarise themselves with escape routes, compartmentation, and fire-fighting equipment within their assigned area.
- ❖ Participate in all relevant training as required.
- ❖ Consult with their Fire Manager regarding fire safety issues.

- ❖ Ensure in the event of a fire that the area for which they are responsible is evacuated, and that all employees, including visitors, are accounted for.
- ❖ Organise assistance for disabled employees and visitors, so that they may quickly and safely exit the building to a Fire Assembly Point.
- ❖ Report to the Fire Manager that their assigned area is clear, and all personnel are accounted for.
- ❖ Conduct investigations into signs of fire if directed by the Fire Manager.
- ❖ Participate in any debriefing after a fire or incident.

Technical / Property

Technical requirements, where specified by fire safety legislation, in relation to operational property from which the Council delivers its services will be managed by the Senior Maintenance Surveyor on behalf of the Service Manager – Property and Capital Programme. Such requirements will include the statutory testing and inspecting of plant, equipment and electrical equipment and installations. The role of the Senior Maintenance Surveyor is to:

- ❖ Develop suitable maintenance routines for fire-fighting equipment, automatic fire detection systems, emergency lighting and electrical installations, equipment, and appliances.
- ❖ Ensure all maintenance routines are regularly conducted and records maintained.
- ❖ Develop procedures for the control of contractors within Orkney Islands Council premises including a hot works permit system as required.
- ❖ Ensure Orkney Islands Council attains legal compliance in all matters under their direct control relating to premise fire precautions through the integration of structural and fabric fire protection, and the inclusion of active systems for detection and control.
- ❖ Ensure fire precautions and safety systems are incorporated within new design works.
- ❖ Assess, prioritise, and seek funding for improvements to fire precautions in conjunction with the Safety & Resilience Service.
- ❖ Inform building occupiers of any changes to alarm systems.
- ❖ Ensure that testing and maintaining regimes, in respect of operational property from which the Council delivers its services, are implemented, performed, and recorded within the individual premises Fire Logbook.



3 Arrangements

Emergency Plans / Premises Fire Policy / Fire Procedures

Emergency plans, policy and procedures must be in place for each individual premise. These documents should be reviewed periodically, including any significant structural alterations to the building, adjustments to work routines, changes in staff, service users' levels, use of the building, or parts of the building and following any incident involving the activation of the fire alarm.

It is the responsibility of each Service Manager or duty holder to ensure staff are familiar with the escape/evacuation routes within their own services or buildings and to prepare appropriate evacuation plans. These documents must be specific to the premises and will relate to the knowledge and experiences of the duty holder, management, and staff.

The documents should cover the safe evacuation of all persons. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to the sequence of evacuation to prevent the obstruction of escape routes, e.g., ambulant first, partially ambulant next and finally bed bound. As a last resort specialist equipment may have to be used during an evacuation. Appropriate training shall be provided for staff expected to use such equipment.

The Safety & Resilience Service can provide advice and guidance on the preparation and review of the documentation.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

The Scottish Government has provided guidance on the safe evacuation of all persons from premises that may require assistance. The guidance draws on Fire Safety Law, Health and Safety Law and the Disability Discrimination Law to produce an evacuation plan for disabled people. This includes those with temporary, lasting, visible and hidden impairments. The plan is commonly known as a PEEP, Personal Emergency Evacuation/Egress Plan.

Heads of Service must, where necessary with the assistance of the Safety & Resilience Service, make the best practicable arrangements for ascertaining what use is made of the building or area by disabled people, and must, in consultation with them, make adequate arrangements for their evacuation in the event of fire.

In drawing up Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans advice, where necessary, should be obtained from the Safety & Resilience service. The PEEP should be produced in consultation with the disabled person where they are treated with respect and not as a problem. All staff involved with producing the PEEP should understand the building's fire safety procedures.

If the building is open to visitors, then it is the responsibility of the duty holder to ensure that visitors are made aware of the premises fire procedures. Visitors are to be advised to make themselves known to staff if they would require assistance in an evacuation.

Fire Safety Risk Assessments

The duty holders are responsible for undertaking premises fire safety risk assessments and should be trained accordingly.

The fire safety risk assessment shall be reviewed annually and on any significant change to the building structure, staff work routine, staff or service user levels. The fire safety risk assessment must be reviewed following any incident involving fire. The review shall consider

changes in legislative requirements, review the current premises fire safety standards and identify any improvements to reduce the risk of fire.

On completion of the fire safety risk assessment a copy should be submitted to the Safety & Resilience Service and Senior Maintenance Surveyor. Any recommendations for improvements are to be included in each assessment. The recommendations must be prioritised, and each recommendation included in an action plan with a person identified as responsible for its completion. The duty holder shall monitor the action list to ensure all actions are completed.

Fire safety risk assessments are to be conducted on all Orkney Islands Council premises.

The Safety & Resilience service can provide guidance if required and will regularly audit premises fire safety risk assessments. The Safety & Resilience Service, in conjunction with the Senior Maintenance Surveyor and duty holders, are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the level of fire safety of the premise(s).

Fire Prevention

Proactive control measures should be implemented to reduce the likelihood of fire by separating or reducing combustible materials from sources of ignition.

- ❖ Good housekeeping, reducing potential fuel sources.
- ❖ Reduce the risk of arson by prohibiting:
 - Storage of materials against buildings.
 - Placing open refuse skips within eight metres of the building.
 - Sighting of temporary buildings within eight metres of the main premises building.
 - Unsecured gas cylinder storage on site.
- ❖ Not allowing the burning of rubbish.
- ❖ No naked flames including candles or portable heaters.
- ❖ Not allowing portable heaters to be left unattended whilst in use.
- ❖ Smoking is prohibited on all OIC property.
- ❖ Boiler, plant rooms, server rooms and electrical mains cupboards should not be used for storage of materials.

Building maintenance and servicing of installed and temporary equipment, fixtures and fittings should be of a high standard. Facility management should ensure that all faults with the premises are reported in a timely manner to the Senior Maintenance Surveyor for action.

Flammable, oxidising and combustible materials must be stored in accordance with current regulations and their Safety Data Sheet. For example, paints, chemicals, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and cleaning products.

Furniture and fittings should be fire retardant and comply with Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. When purchasing or installing furniture and fittings into a premises consideration should be taken into how they will aid a fire and prevent the safe evacuation from the building by producing toxic smoke.

Fire Fighting Access

Access to buildings must be maintained, control measures should be extended to the building curtilage, surrounding land use and vehicle access together with arrangements in the event of the Fire and Rescue Service attendance.

Fire Protection and Support Services.

The Service Manager - Property and Capital Programme is responsible for establishing the standards and best practice in fire precautions, and in the design and maintenance for fire protection. No works to the buildings fabric or services is to take place without prior approval from the Service Manager or as delegated by them

Buildings Undergoing Refurbishment

Where the proposed alterations or refurbishment result in change to the internal design with consequences for fire safety, the project manager shall ensure consideration is given towards the premise's current compliance with standards and shall produce a detailed fire safety risk assessment for consideration in the scheme development. Appropriate liaison with the Safety & Resilience Service and representatives of the users most likely to be affected should take place in advance of work proceedings. The new fire safety risk assessment shall be provided to the Safety & Resilience Service, the occupiers and communicated to the relevant Service. A copy of the fire safety risk assessment shall be held on site.

Fire precaution improvements to current standards shall be included in all future works where reasonably practicable. When works are not fully progressed, notice with details shall be provided to the Service Manager – Property & Capital Programme for inclusion in the long-term maintenance programme.

Active Fire Protection

The Senior Maintenance Surveyor will provide and maintain to current standards the premises fire detection and alarm system by periodic servicing, maintenance and fault reporting. Active fire protection includes, but is not limited to the following active systems:

- ❖ Sprinkler Systems
- ❖ Fire Hydrants
- ❖ Fire Appliances
- ❖ Fire automated, voice and manual alarm systems
- ❖ Automated fire doors

The duty holder is responsible for conducting and recording routine inspections of the fire protection system at their premises. The duty holder is required to report all faults identified to the Senior Maintenance Surveyor and monitor the progress of repairs.

Fire-Fighting Equipment

The Senior Maintenance Surveyor will ensure that contracts exist for provision and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment for use by the building occupants.

Fire Safety Signage

The Senior Maintenance Surveyor will provide and maintain fire signage to ensure legal conformity. The fire safety risk assessment will review the signage within the premises, and where necessary will raise any issues where signage is inadequate or nonconforming. The duty holder will inform the Senior Maintenance Surveyor of any issues relating to emergency signage.

Means of Escape Doors

Emergency exit doors, including those along escape routes, must not be locked or fastened so that they cannot be easily and immediately opened by any person who may require using them in an emergency.

Training

All new employees shall undergo fire safety induction training to comply with the requirements of the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The person responsible for them shall give specific training when they first attend their place of work. This will include information relating to fire alarms, assembly areas, emergency exit routes, emergency equipment and actions on raising the fire alarm and hearing the fire alarm.

All employees shall undergo initial Fire Safety Awareness Training, appropriate to their duties and place of work, on employment and at regular intervals throughout their employment. The duration of the training shall be commensurate with the duties expected from members of staff. A record of such training should be held by the duty holder in the Fire Log Book.

Fire Drills and Exercises

Fire drills should be arranged by the duty holder and conducted regularly at all OIC occupied premises. Each staff member should be involved in at least one fire drill over a twelve-month period and recorded in the Fire Log Book.

The purpose of the drills is to assess the effectiveness of the actions in the event of a fire and the Emergency Fire Evacuation Plan for the premises. The duty holder shall oversee each drill and hold a debriefing, with personnel involved, to ensure that the plans and procedures worked effectively and to record all relevant information with any recommendations for improvement. A record of the fire drill should be held in the Fire Log Book, including the details of those that attended.

As far as it is reasonably practicable, fire drills should include the complete evacuation of the premises. However, due to the high dependency of some Care Homes, special consideration should be given during fire drills (at these locations only) to staged evacuation, or simulated evacuation involving staff or others deputising for service users. The premises Fire Safety Risk Assessment should determine the degree and nature of fire evacuation, which should be practiced during the fire drill.

It may be appropriate to allow an Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (false alarm) to be recorded as a fire drill depending on the individual circumstances of the incident. In making this decision the duty holder must consider the extent of the actions taken by staff and deliberate whether it genuinely constitutes a fire drill.

Contractors

It is a requirement under the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 that OIC informs persons who are not in their employment of the Fire Safety Procedures within premises. When any contractor attends OIC premises, the person responsible for them while on site must ensure that they are familiar with the requirements of OIC policy and procedures relating to Fire Safety. All contractors attending OIC premises must be made aware of the Fire Safety Policy, for major contracts this should be included in the tendering process.

Contractors should be made aware of any hazard in the area they are working, the means of raising the alarm, actions on hearing the alarm and their nearest Fire Assembly Point. The

contractor should also bring to the attention of the person responsible for the area of work, what the work will entail, and any fire risks associated with their activities. In both instances, the flow of information should be recorded.

All contractors on arrival at the premises that they are working should make themselves known to the duty holder or their representative so that they can be briefed on fire safety. The contractors' details should be recorded on arrival at the site and their departure so that they can be accounted for in the event of a fire.

Business Continuity

In the unlikely event of a workplace being unsuitable for immediate return to work because of fire damage, staff should refer to and comply with their Service Business Continuity Plan.

4 Monitoring and Review

Audit and Review

The Safety & Resilience Service shall establish a risk prioritisation audit of council premises fire precautions. The review shall be undertaken at a frequency demanded by the prevailing risk. If made aware and requested, the Safety & Resilience Service can also provide guidance and support to duty holders for the revise of fire safety risk assessments required prior to special events with large assembly and public entertainment events.

Records

Duty holders must maintain, readily accessible, a Fire Log Book, which will record all the fire-related routine inspections, training, maintenance, fire drills and servicing of equipment. This can take the form of the traditional red Fire Log Book or a folder containing all the relevant records. The Senior Maintenance Surveyor shall provide the initial provision of this record book. It is then the responsibility of the duty holder to maintain and make available for recording purposes and inspections by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Safety & Resilience Service the log book. The contents of the Fire Log Book shall at the very least contain records of:

- ❖ Fire Safety Plans, Policy, and Procedures.
- ❖ Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- ❖ Walkthrough premises checking fire routes (daily).
- ❖ Visual checks on internal fire door automated activation on Fire Call Point test
- ❖ Fire Call Points and Fire Control Panel test (weekly)
- ❖ External Fire Doors check (monthly)
- ❖ Fire Appliance and Blankets visual check (monthly)
- ❖ Emergency lights test (monthly)
- ❖ Planned Preventative Maintenance arranged by the Senior Maintenance Surveyor
- ❖ Fire Drills/Evacuations
- ❖ Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
- ❖ Scottish Fire and Rescue Service visits
- ❖ Staff Training

The Senior Maintenance Surveyor will maintain a record of all repairs, maintenance and servicing of fire safety equipment on OIC premises.

Reporting of Incidents

Any fire resulting in smoke, flame or heat, whether damage is evident or not, and any near miss resulting in damage by charring or overheating such as radiated heat from a heater or light source, or the overheating of electrical wiring necessitating wiring repairs, shall be reported to:

- ❖ The Senior Maintenance Surveyor
- ❖ The 24hr duty Safety & Resilience Officer
- ❖ The duty holders line manager
- ❖ Recorded in the Fire Log Book

The Safety & Resilience duty Officer will conduct an initial investigation and notify the Council's Insurance Officer.