Policy Title	**Electrical Safety Policy**
Date Adopted	**February 2017**
Review Date	**February 2024**
Date of Next Review	**February 2026**

Nehemiah HOUSING
Supporting BAME communities to thrive

ELECTRICAL SAFETY POLICY

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Electrical Safety Policy

1.0 Introduction

This policy sets out how Nehemiah will manage and ensure the safety of fixed electrical installations, both landlord and domestic adopted in any rising and lateral mains, and lightning protection measures in its owned and managed properties and the portable electrical appliances it provides.

Electricity is the hazard associated with this policy which can result in fires, serious harm and even death and can result because of:

- Direct contact with a live electrical supply
- Indirect contact with electricity e.g., as a result of water ingress
- Faults, damage, or defects with the installation / equipment
- An inadequate or deficient earth
- System overload
- Failure to comply with legislative requirements
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This policy sets out the standards required to ensure as far as is reasonably practical the continued safety of employees, residents, and others.

2.0 Policy Statement

It is the policy of Nehemiah to provide precautions to be taken against the risk of personal injury from electricity. It applies to all electrical equipment and systems including those manufactured, purchased, installed, or used.

The main objective is to comply with the law and in particular 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
- Promote good practice where reasonably practicable
- Ensure remedial works are carried out within appropriate timescales so that homes and our residents remain safe and electrical installations are maintained to a high standard
- Detail a comprehensive electrical inspection and monitoring system
- Ensure adequate records and quality monitoring systems are implemented

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to the repair, upgrading, testing, servicing and inspection of all electrical installations as well as the procurement, testing and use of portable electrical appliances.

The following is a list of key legislation relating to electricity:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EWR). This legislation sets out precautions to be taken against the risk of death or personal injury from electricity in work activities. All electricians carrying out electrical work, whether as an employer, employee, or self-employed person, must comply with the relevant requirements. In particular, regulation 18th which requires all persons working on electrical installations must have the technical knowledge and experience to prevent danger or injury.

Four main areas that need to be considered by Nehemiah in relation to EWR are:

- Systems
- Electrical equipment
- Conductors
- Competence of persons in respect of work activities on or near electrical equipment

The requirements set out in the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Wiring Regulations 18th Edition BS7671:2008, inclusive of amendment 3, are acknowledges by Nehemiah as representing standards that when followed would ensure compliance with EWR.

- The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994 - These regulations apply when electrical appliances are provided as part of a tenancy and require Nehemiah to ensure that the appliances are safe when first supplied. Although there is no specific requirement for portable appliance testing to be carried out in rented accommodation, the landlord is required to take reasonable steps to ensure that appliances such as electric kettles, fridges and washing machines provided as part of the tenancy agreement are safe.
- Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- The Landlords and Tenants Act 1985. Under this Act Nehemiah has a responsibility to ensure that the electrical installation in a rented property is:
  Safe when a tenancy begins, and
  Maintained in a safe condition throughout the tenancy
- Housing Act 2004. This Act introduced the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) for assessing risks within domestic premises. From an electrical perspective this includes consideration of general lighting provision, socket-outlet provision, escape lighting (emergency lighting), automatic fire detection and electrical hazards for fixed wiring and portable electrical equipment. Arrangements for compliance with this requirement are managed by the Operations Department.

- Building Regulations (including Part P requirements). In January 2005, the Government introduced electrical safety rules for dwellings into the Building Regulations for England and Wales. Because of this, most fixed electrical installation work carried out in homes must, by law, meet the Building Regulations. Part P states that 'reasonable provision shall be made in the design and installation of electrical installations in order to protect persons operating, maintaining or altering the installations from fire or injury'.

4.0 Definitions

Electrical Installation

An electrical installation is made up of all the fixed electrical equipment that is supplied through the electricity meter. It includes the cables that are often hidden in the fabric of the building (walls and ceilings), accessories (sockets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit (fuse box) that contains all the fuses or circuit-breakers.

Electrical Equipment

Includes anything used, intended to be used or installed for use, to generate, provide, transmit, transform, rectify, convert, conduct, distribute, control, store, measure or use electrical energy.

Portable Electrical Appliance

Any electrical appliance which plugs into an electrical supply.

White Goods

Electrical appliances provided within tenancies e.g. fridges and freezers.

5.0 Competency

Nehemiah will only appoint skilled and competent persons to carry out electrical inspection and testing. A person shall be deemed skilled to carry out the appropriate inspection and testing only if they have sufficient qualification, knowledge and experience.

We will review and monitor the qualifications of all electrical contractors and their engineers / operatives during the contract tendering process and thereafter at periodic intervals thereafter and record the findings of these checks.

It is important for electrical engineers / operatives to be aware of the dangers associated with electricity and therefore they and their organisations must put in place measures to:

- Ensure that no danger occurs to any person, property or installation
- Compare the inspection and testing results with the design criteria

- Take a view on the condition of the installation and advise on any remedial works and their relevant priority
- In the event of a dangerous situation, make safe and immediately provide recommendation to the responsible person
- Issue appropriate certification, following review by a qualifying supervisor where appropriate and keep necessary records

All appointed electrical contractors shall be registered with the NICEIC, ECA, NAPIT or other accredited body and shall be registered as an approved contractor under a recognised certification Scheme incompliance with Part P of the Building Regulations.

All Electricians must have successfully completed City and Guilds 2382 (17th Edition) City and Guilds 2391 (Inspection, Testing and Certification of Electrical Installations) or an equivalent standard.

A portable electrical appliance test does not need to be carried out by an electrician, but greater knowledge and experience is needed than for inspection alone, and the person performing the test must have the right equipment for the task. They should know how to use the test equipment and how to interpret the results. The Health and Safety team can provide advice regarding what is deemed appropriate competence.

6.0 Electrical Installations - Testing and Certification

The purpose for testing, inspecting, and certifying electrical installations is to determine, so far as is reasonably practicable, and to report on, any factors impairing or likely to impair the safety of an electrical installation.

(I) Building Control Competence Certificates

In domestic premises, apart from some types of minor work, all electrical work must be notified to Building Control of the Local Authority upon completion. Building Control will then issue a Part P Certificate. This certificate states that the new electrical installation work, described on the certificate, complies with the Building Regulations. The certificate may be requested, for example, by a purchaser's solicitor when you sell your property.

Certificates will be retained for the life of the building.

Testing Intervals

(II) Nehemiah will ensure that all owned and managed domestic premises, communal installations and workplaces are tested in accordance with the timescales set out within the Institute of Engineering

Technology (IET) Regulations and additionally will test and issue appropriate certification at a change in tenancy.

Nehemiah will also carry out Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) testing on all properties that are subject to specific types of improvement works where electrical circuits are affected.

Nehemiah will regularly review and monitor the qualifications of all contractors' employees delivering works to ensure that only appropriately trained and skilled employees are engaged on these works.

All new installations shall be provided with an Electrical Installation Certificate complete with a schedule of inspections and test results. The documents shall be suitably completed and compliant with the requirements of BS 7671, IET Guidance Note 1.

(III) Electrical installations will be subject to a full electrical condition report test at the following times:

- New build - first inspection carried out 10 years after installation
- Rewires - first inspection carried out 10 years after installation
- Ongoing testing and inspection - every five years unless the engineer sets a shorter timescale. Engineers cannot set a period exceeding 5 years unless the installation is new.
- Following any major upgrade works where electrical installations are affected

When electrical engineers consider assigning a re-inspection period sooner than the timescales set out above, they will take into account of:

The type of installation and adequacy of earthing and bonding

- The suitability of the switchgear and control gear
- The serviceability of accessories and fittings
- The type of systems and their condition
- The extent of any wear and tear, damage or other deterioration of other parts of the installation and level of misuse
- The presence of adequate identification and notices
- Any change in use of the premises which have led to, or might lead to, deficiencies in the installation
- Previous EICR observations and recommendations
- The frequency and quality of maintenance

(IV) Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR)

The electrician carrying out the inspection will provide an EICR to record the findings of the inspection.

In addition to the main body of the report, which will identify departures from the requirements of BS7671 and provide an overall assessment of the

suitability of the installation for continued use, the report should be accompanied by schedules of inspection and test results.

(V) EICR Recommendations

This will make recommendations which will be reviewed by a competent person (Technical Officer - Electrical) and the necessary remedial works prioritised accordingly. Where appropriate, works will be batched and delivered through programmes. Where recommendations relate to observations only, these will be monitored through subsequent inspection and testing. Electrical works identified on certification will be recorded using the following categories:

- Code C1 (**Danger Present**): Where a real and immediate danger is observed that puts the safety of those using the installation at risk. Contractors must be given authority to undertake these works immediately without seeking approval from Nehemiah

- Code C2 (**Potentially Dangerous**): An observed deficiency not considered to be dangerous at the time of inspection but would become a real and immediate danger if a fault or other foreseeable event was to occur. For these recommendations the contractor will formally notify Nehemiah within 10 working days of all C2 recommendations. Nehemiah will review these recommendations and instruct as deemed appropriate.

- Code C3 (**Improvement Recommended**): Used to indicate that, whilst an observed deficiency is not considered to be a source of immediate or potential danger, improvement would contribute to an enhancement of the safety of the electrical installation. For these recommendations the contractor will formally notify Nehemiah within 10 working days of all C3 recommendations. Nehemiah will review these recommendations and instruct as deemed appropriate

7.0 Changes in Tenancy

At a change of tenancy including a mutual exchange an electrical installation condition report (EICR) is to be undertaken prior to tenancies being re-let except for Home Options assured shorthold tenancies where a visual inspection is to be undertaken at the change in tenancy.

Visual inspections must, as a minimum, include checks to ensure there are no broken or missing accessories, no accessible live parts, no signs of burning at accessories or electrical equipment and a manual test of any residual current devices. A record of the visual inspection must be made on the EICR form filling in only the appropriate and applicable fields for a visual inspection. The EICR will be processed as normal.

8.0 Portable Electrical Appliances

Three types of inspection and testing apply to portable electrical appliances.

(I) User checks (visual)

Employees who use electrical equipment must be encouraged to visually check it before use and to listen for sounds that suggest the equipment may be defective, for example:

- Damage (apart from light scuffing) to the cable sheath
- Damage to the plug such as cracked casing or bent pins
- Inadequate joints, including taped joints in the cable
- Insecure cable sheath where it enters the plug or equipment. Obvious evidence would be if the coloured insulation of the internal cable cores were showing
- Conditions the equipment is not suitable for e.g. wet or contaminated areas
- Damage to the casing or loose parts or screws
- Evidence of overheating (burn marks or discoloration)
- Unusual noises, vibration, smells or vapours / smoke

The checks also apply to extension leads and associated plugs and sockets. The user should make visual checks before and during use. Any faults should be reported to the Line Manager and taken out of use immediately.

Where equipment is more likely to sustain damage through day to day use the risk assessment must stipulate that mandatory checks are to be undertaken, preferably with records made, and the frequency of the checks e.g. daily.

(II) Formal Visual Inspections

The most important component of a maintenance regime is usually the formal visual inspection, carried out routinely by a trained person. Such inspections can pick up most potentially dangerous faults and they should include the visual checks listed above but carried out in a more formal and systematic manner. Additional items which should be inspected include:

- The removal of plug covers to check that the fuse inside the plug is correctly rated.
- A check to ensure the cord grip is effective and secure
- A check to verify cable terminations are correctly wired and secure including earth connections
- Looking for signs of internal damage, overheating or ingress of liquid or foreign matter.
- Check for good housekeeping to ensure that the equipment is installed and operated in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

Check the means of disconnection from the supply under all conditions. There is no need to take equipment apart during a formal visual inspection since this should only be done when conducting a combined inspection and test.

(III) Combined Inspection and Tests (PAT Test)

The purpose of the inspection and test is to detect faults which may not be apparent by visual checks and inspections e.g. loss of earth integrity or deterioration of insulation integrity. It must only be carried out by someone who is competent in the safe use of the test equipment and who knows how to interpret the results obtained. This person must be capable of inspecting the equipment and, where necessary, dismantling it to check the cable connections. Care must always be exercised when conducting tests.

Combined inspection and testing is the only reliable way of detecting such faults, and should be carried out to a set program. This program should be at periods appropriate to the equipment, the manner and frequency of use and the environment and should also be undertaken after any repair, modification or similar work.

Portable electric appliances will not be subject to combined inspection and testing until it has been in use for 12 months. This is permissible as appliances with CE markings are tested as part of the manufacturing process.

There are no specific legal requirements relating to the frequency of combined inspections and tests of electrical equipment however Nehemiah is bound contractually by Local Authorities to undertake testing on an annual basis and therefore this period has been adopted by Nehemiah as its Policy.

After an item of electrical equipment has been subject to a combined inspection and tested a record must be produced and a suitable label attached to the equipment in a readily visible location. The label must show, as a minimum, the date when the equipment was inspected / tested and the date when it is due for its next inspection/test. It should be noted that the requirement to inspect/test electrical equipment also applies to privately owned equipment used within Nehemiah offices and workplaces where permission has been given by the Manager e.g. phone charger.

9.0 Electrical Appliances Provided to Tenants (White Goods)

Before providing new portable electrical appliances to tenants, it must be established that each appliance displays at least the CE Mark, which is the product manufacturer's claim that it meets all the requirements of European legislation. Best practice would be for items to be procured which display additional safety marks, such as the British Standard Kitemark or the 'BEAB Approved' mark (which indicate that the equipment has been assessed by an independent body as meeting with the relevant product standard) as these tend to provide greater assurance of electrical safety.

It is also important to ensure the electrical installation is suitable for the equipment provided and the equipment provided is suitable for the conditions and location where it is likely to be used.

When providing portable electrical equipment to tenants, the tenants should always be told to read and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Copies of the instructions should be left in the property so the tenants can refer to them as and when required.

At the change in tenancy white goods will be:

- Replaced with new appliances, or
- Electrically PAT tested, or
- Gifted

Where appliances are gifted the tenant must sign a declaration accepting full ownership of the appliance. This certificate must be retained on the tenants file. Housing Officers are to ensure that manufacturers' instructions relating to the electrical equipment is available for new tenants unless the items are gifted.

10.0 Photovoltaic (PV) Systems

Photovoltaic (PV) panels, also called solar electric panels, convert energy from the sun into electricity. Unlike the power used by conventional mains electrical equipment, the power that PV systems generate is DC (direct current). DC installations have a continuous current, making them more hazardous (volt for volt) than normal AC (alternating current) electrical installations where the voltage and current oscillate. Once the power has passed through an inverter it is changed to AC.

All electrical installations, by their nature, will carry some degree of fire risk. Although fires caused by PV panels are rare, any fire involving a building with a PV array can present an increased risk to occupants and fire-fighters as they would continue to produce electricity there is currently no national UK guidance specific to fighting fires involving PV systems. In most respects, fires involving photovoltaics are little different from any fire involving live electrics. Until such time as legislation and / or guidance is issued we continue to compile an asset register of PV installations.

11.0 Lightning Protection

We will ensure as reasonably practical, that all its existing lightning protection systems installed on its blocks and workplaces are maintained to BS 6651:1999 or BS EN 62305 if newly installed or upgraded.

Lightning protection will be subject to annual testing for which records of the testing must be retained.

We will also undertake checks as necessary to determine the presence of lightning protection installations and where identified added to the programme of annual testing.

12.0 Access

Nehemiah will apply a three-stage process of communication to gain access to tenanted properties and carry out an electrical Inspection. The third stage states that in accordance with the terms outlined in their Tenancy Agreement, need to seek Possession (NSP) following failure to give access.

13 Equality Impact Assessment

13.1 Was a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required? Yes

13.2 When was EIA conducted and by who?
The EIA conducted by Company Secretary and Head of Governance on the 30 January 2024