



Health & Safety Policy



Scope of Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for the provision of health, safety and welfare for employees.

Applicability

The Policy applies to all members of Platform Housing Group.



1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive summary of the health, safety and welfare responsibilities throughout the Group. The Group will achieve this by promoting a positive health and safety culture linked to its core values.



2. Context

- 2.1 In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, this Policy outlines the Group's commitment to managing the health, safety and welfare (physical and mental well-being) of employees, contractors and others who may be effected by the Group's activities.

It establishes clear lines of responsibilities at all levels of the organisation and is supported by associated business specific Policies, Procedures and Guidance documents.



3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 It identifies day to day and overall operational responsibility for all aspects of health and safety at the Group.



4. Policy Outline

- 4.1 The main theme of this policy is to define the Group's legal responsibilities as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. It provides a comprehensive summary of the health and safety responsibilities throughout the organisation.

5. Statement of Intent

Safety is one of our guiding principles. We are committed to complying with Safety, Health and Environmental legal requirements as a minimum. We strive to maintain the highest standards of performance, always Health & Safety Policy working towards best practice.

The Group recognises and accepts its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and supporting legislation. This will be achieved by the implementation of a safety governance framework through which our vision and commitment to safety is set, to include robust risk management strategies.

The Group will always endeavour to identify hazards and manage risks arising from the work of the Group, and apply safe working practices, to ensure colleagues and customers work and live in a safe environment.

High standards of safety, health and environmental management do not happen by accident. We all have a role to play and if each and every one of us puts safety at the heart of everything we do, together we will continue to provide Group activities in a healthy, innovative and progressive environment together in an honest and open culture.

The Group's management will actively engage and consult with its employees to communicate relevant health and safety information, arrangements, objectives and performance information and colleagues will be provided with necessary information, instruction, training and supervision, to ensure that everyone understands their health and safety responsibilities.

The Group will appoint competent persons to be responsible for keeping workplace health, safety and welfare arrangements under constant review, to liaise with enforcing authorities where necessary and keep the Board and Management informed of relevant changes in legislation.

The Group will strive for continuous improvements in health and safety performance and this will be monitored through key performance indicators and reviewed by managers and safety consultative forum. The Boards will receive regular updates on performance and managers will ensure that health and safety is a regular item on team meeting agendas. The Board will ensure adequate resources are available to continually improve and develop a robust health and safety management framework.

The Group will maintain Employer Liability insurance, against liability for death, injury or disease which may affect its employees arising out of and in the course of employment, if caused by negligence and or breach of statutory duty on the part of the Group.



Elizabeth Froude
Group Chief Executive
Platform Housing Group

November 2019

6. Responsibility for Health and Safety

6.1 Statutory Duty of the Group

The Group will comply with its duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and of visitors to its premises and, in general, to:

- Make workplaces safe and without risks to health;
- Ensure plant and machinery are safe and that safe systems of work are set and followed;
- Ensure articles and substances are moved, stored and used safely; and
- Give employees the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for their health and safety.

In particular, the Group will:

- Assess the risks to health and safety of its employees;
- Make arrangements for implementing the health and safety measures identified as necessary by this assessment;
- Record the significant findings of the risk assessment and the arrangements for health and safety measures;
- Draw up a health and safety policy statement; including the health and safety organisation and arrangements in force, and bring it to the attention of its employees;
- Appoint competent persons to assist with health and safety responsibilities;
- Set up emergency procedures;
- Provide adequate First Aid facilities;

- Make sure that the workplace satisfies health, safety and welfare requirements, e.g. for ventilation, temperature, lighting and for sanitary, washing and rest facilities;
- Ensure that work equipment is suitable for its intended use as far as health and safety is concerned, and that it is properly maintained and used;
- Prevent or adequately control exposure to substances that may damage health;
- Take precautions against danger from flammable or explosive hazards, electrical equipment, noise or vibration;
- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations and, where they cannot be avoided, reduce the risk of injury;
- Provide health surveillance as appropriate;
- Provide free any protective clothing or equipment, where risks are not adequately controlled by other means;
- Ensure that appropriate safety signs are provided and maintained; and
- Report certain injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the appropriate health and safety enforcing authority.

6. Responsibility for Health and Safety (cont)

6.2 Statutory Duty of the Group's Employees

Employees have legal duties, and the Group seeks assurance our contractors also comply with the following:

- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of other persons who may be affected by what they do or do not do;
- To co-operate with the Group on health and safety;
- To use work items provided by the Group correctly, including personal protective equipment, in accordance with training or instructions;
- Not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for health, safety and welfare purposes;
- To report at the earliest opportunity any near misses, injuries, accidents or dangerous occurrences, including those involving the public and participants in activities organised by the Group;
- Support and assist any investigation into incidents or events related to health and safety issues; and
- Complete any relevant health and safety training courses provided.

6.3 Policy for Visitors and Contractors

Visitors should be escorted by their host who will take responsibility for the visitor(s) and assist in their evacuation from the premises during an emergency or arrange help in the event of an accident.

Contractors working on any of the Group's premises should report any concerns relating to their own safety or suspected unsafe working practices to the relevant line manager who will investigate and report.

7. Organisation of Health and Safety

7.1 Health and Safety Committee and Representatives

Health and Safety Committee & Representatives will:

- Operate under terms of reference;
- Have Board representation;
- Make representations on general matters affecting the health, safety and welfare at work of employees;
- Review consultation documents provided to them and promptly respond with appropriate comments;
- Attend a formal Health and Safety Committee meeting every quarter. The Committee will be the primary mechanism for review and monitoring the Group's Health and safety Management System;
- Disseminate information to those employees they are appointed to represent following discussion with their line manager; and
- Review incidents, dangerous occurrences and occupational diseases reported under RIDDOR as provided to the Health & Safety Committee.

7.2 Health and Safety Champions

Health and Safety Champions will:

- Act as workplace/departmental health and safety points of contact;
- Provide advice on accident and near miss reporting;
- Conduct workplace safety tours;
- Escalate health and safety concerns to the Compliance Team; and
- Attend health and safety committee meetings.

7.3 Health and Safety Advisors

Health and Safety Advisors will:

- Provide practical guidance on compliance with relevant health and safety legislation, including risk assessments;
- Monitor the effectiveness of health and safety policies and procedures by reviewing incident data;
- Liaise with the Learning and Development Team in provision of health and safety training;
- Maintain and monitor the accident reporting system;
- Review and assist where applicable, investigations carried out by line managers; and
- Bring to the attention of the appropriate persons any matters giving rise to serious health and safety concerns.

7. Organisation of Health and Safety

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7.4 Health and Safety Committee and Representatives

Line Managers and Supervisors are responsible for the implementation of the health and safety policy within their areas of control. They must also ensure that employees within their area of responsibility are properly trained and receive the support they need to perform their duties. In addition to their duties as employees, all managers and supervisors will:

- Take an active and visible role in the management of health and safety in areas under their management;
- Monitor the effectiveness of the health and safety policy within their section;
- Ensure all activities carried out by employees they manage do not create an uncontrolled risk to anyone affected by its undertakings;
- Ensure that risk assessments are completed and reviewed in areas under their control;
- Ensure that the health and safety policy is communicated to all employees within their control;
- Ensure that supervisors are made aware of their roles and responsibilities in the effective management of health and safety and receive relevant training;
- Ensure that employees are competent and provided with suitable health and safety information, instruction and supervision appropriate to their role, including the delivery of health and safety induction training for new employees;

- Advise their line management of any financial or resources requirements to meet health, safety and welfare needs;
- Ensure that accidents, incidents (including violence to staff) and near misses are reported and recorded and that local investigations are conducted; and
- Ensure fire precautions and procedures are understood and followed.

7.5 Group Executive Team

In addition to their duties as employees, the Group Executive Team are responsible for:

- An active and visible role in the management of health and safety within their own directorate;
- Ensuring any financial or other resource needs to meet health, safety and welfare requirements are provided;
- Ensure that health, safety and welfare is taken into consideration when introducing new strategies and policies;
- Ensure that all of their managers are aware of their role and responsibilities in the effective management of health and safety;
- Ensure adequate representation at Health and Safety Committee meetings and give due consideration to issues raised at the meeting; and
- Ensure any health and safety issues for which they cannot achieve a satisfactory solution within the resources available to them is referred to the board.

7. Organisation of Health and Safety

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7.6 Chief Executive

In addition to their duties as an employee, the Chief Executive will:

- Help develop a positive safety culture within the Group, by encouraging and supporting the active involvement and participation of all employees in matters affecting their health, safety and welfare and supporting and promoting employee well-being;
- Ensure adequate resources are provided to meet all safety requirements and obligations of the Group; and
- Ensure that the organisational structure of the Group is appropriate to effectively manage health and safety.

7.7 Platform Housing Boards

The Boards have responsibility for matters relating to the Group's obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and any relevant statutory provisions affecting its employees, members of the public and any other persons who may be affected by work activities. Members will ensure they support Health and Safety Policies and take into account of health and safety issues in their role as Board members.

This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that an effective Health and Safety Policy is in place;
- Having Board representation on the Health and Safety Committee;
- Receiving reports on Health and Safety performance within the Group;
- Ensuring, where reasonably practicable, that the necessary resources are made available for the successful implementation of the policy; and
- Delegating responsibility to the Chief Executive for the successful implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

7.8 Property Care

Property Care comprises Quality, Environment, Safety and Health (QESH) professionals who operate a safety management framework accredited to ISO standards, whose governance is driven by the Property Care Board and senior management. Property Care safety professionals will work closely with corporate health and safety professionals and will provide the relevant safety policies that cover their operations.

8. Health and Safety Arrangements

8.1 General

Specific regulations stated within this policy will be supported by further guidance documents and additional policies, where appropriate.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that risk within their area of responsibility is properly managed. Therefore, responsibility for producing suitable and sufficient risk assessments lies with line managers, supervisors or any other person who organises work for others under their control.

8.2 Incident, Near Miss, Hazard Reporting and Investigation

The Group's policy is to assess risks and use preventative measures to reduce the risks of incidents occurring. If accidents, incidents, near misses and occupational ill-health occur the circumstances are to be reported and investigated. As part of the investigation process, line managers will review risk assessments and safe working procedures and make improvements where necessary.

8.3 Display Screen Equipment

Daily use of DSE is very high within the organisation. The Group's Policy is to comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, and to minimise the risk of occupational ill health by ensuring that operators have suitable work stations, training, and appropriate breaks.

8.4 Fire Safety Policy, Drills and Evacuation Procedures

The Group's policy is to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:

- All employees must know the fire evacuation procedures, escape routes and assembly points;
- The fire alarm system is to be tested weekly;
- A fire safety policy is in place;
- Fire risk assessments are in place for all places of work; and
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS) are in place for those employees who require them.

8.5 First Aid

The Group's policy in respect of first aid is to meet the minimum requirements given in the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. Agile and lone working means that employees may not have access to suitably trained first aiders, in this case line managers will ensure that adequate measures are in place for employees to summon assistance in the case of an emergency.

8.6 Lone Working

The Group has a wide range of lone workers, including those working from home, people working outside normal hours, those working away from a fixed base and those working alone in properties and housing schemes.

It is the Group's policy for line managers to assess the risks to employees to provide appropriate communications, monitoring and protection proportionate to the risk.

8. Health and Safety Arrangements

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8.7 **New & Expectant Mothers**

The Group's policy is to comply with the requirements of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, in respect of new and expectant mothers. Line Managers will complete a risk assessment and review regularly to ensure that risks are adequately controlled.

8.8 **Personal Protective Equipment**

Systems of work shall be selected which avoid the need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) wherever reasonably practicable. PPE shall be regarded as the last resort to protect against risk to health and safety, however, where the risk assessment identifies the requirement to wear PPE, employees are to ensure that they comply with the risk assessment and wear PPE where required.

8.9 **Hazardous Substances**

The Group's policy in respect of hazardous substances is to conduct risk assessments and to adopt a hierarchy of measures to prevent and control exposure to employees and those affected by our activities.

8.10 **Manual Handling**

The Group's policy in respect of manual handling is to identify and minimise risks in compliance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

8.11 **Occupational Road Risk**

Use of the road and vehicles is one of the higher risks to which many employees are exposed at work. It is the Group's policy that arrangements will be in place to mitigate this risk.

Drivers must also adhere to the requirements of the Highway Code and to prevailing legislative requirements for UK drivers.

Drivers of company vehicles must also make reference to the Drivers Handbook.

8.12 **Risk Assessments**

Line Managers and Supervisors must identify risks and carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments. The risk assessment should identify significant hazards arising from work activities under their control.

The assessment should identify all persons who could be harmed, including employees, members of the public, contractors and other persons who may be affected. Extra consideration should be made to identify vulnerable individuals or groups, for example, young persons and pregnant colleagues.

8.13 **Stress**

The Group will monitor stress through absence statistics, staff surveys and other means. Training will be provided to employees and managers to enable them to identify stressors in the workplace, recognise signs of stress and introduce coping strategies.

8. Health and Safety Arrangements

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8.14 Hand-Arm Vibration

The use of certain vibrating equipment such as grounds maintenance equipment, breakers and drilling equipment carry a risk of hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) leading to circulatory damage and disabling loss of hand function.

Work will be arranged to avoid risk of high levels of exposure. Work equipment will be maintained to minimise risk. Health surveillance will be conducted for those employees who are considered to be at risk.

8.15 Noise

The Group's policy is to comply with the requirements of the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005. Specifically to:

- Assess the risks to employees from noise at work;
- Reduce the noise exposure that produces those risks;
- Provide employees with hearing protection where we cannot reduce the noise exposure enough by using other methods;
- Ensure legal limits on noise exposure are not exceeded; and
- Carry out health surveillance where there is a risk to health.

8.16 Work at Height

The Group's policy is to comply with the requirements of the Work at Height Regulations 2005. Work of this nature will be supported by a Work at Height policy.

8. Health and Safety Arrangements

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8.17 Occupational Health

It is the Group's policy to address risks to the health of people at work and to provide practitioners when necessary to assist managers and employees to control those risks.

8.18 Drugs and Alcohol

It is the Group's policy to reduce the effect of alcohol and drugs in the workplace and therefore protect the safety of employees and others.

Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substances whilst at work.

8.19 Portable Electrical Appliances

It is the Group's policy that all electrical appliances connected to a socket within the workplace are subject to an annual electrical test by a competent person.

8.20 Asbestos

It is the Group's policy to identify and assess the condition of asbestos containing materials that employees may encounter within properties and to manage the risks in compliance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2016.

8.21 Legionella

Legionella risk assessments are conducted for all places of work within the Group and are covered by additional policies.

8.22 Contractors

The Group's policy is to employ only those contractors who conform to the highest standards of health and safety and who adequately control risk arising from their activities.

Contractors are required to demonstrate that they operate a safety regime which avoids loss or damage to people, equipment, materials and the environment. Contractors must provide their health and safety policy, risk assessments and method statements (RAMS), current public liability insurance policy both of which are relevant for the work to be undertaken and must comply with the Group's health and safety policy as well as their own.



9. Equality and Diversity

- 9.1 We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our relevant Group policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.
- 9.2 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken in respect of this policy and which identified no negative impacts on any person/group with a protected characteristic as a result of this policy.
- 9.3 Anyone is able to make a complaint about the service they have received and this is managed under our Complaints Policy.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 The next policy review is scheduled for February 2022 and then every two years thereafter.

11. Associated Documents/Policies

- 11.1 List of documents/associated policies/publications:
- Accident and Incident Reporting Policy
 - Lone Working Policy

Author:	Terry Short
Version:	Final
Release date:	February 2020
Next review date:	February 2022
Document type:	Policy
Approved by:	Risk & Performance Forum
PIA Completed (where required):	Yes
EIA completed (where required):	Yes
Customer consultation: (where appropriate)	N/A
Employee Handbook amends: (where appropriate)	N/A