Community Counts
Milnbank
Housing Association
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TO:	MHA Board
PREPARED BY:	Mark Smith (Director of Asset Management)
SUBJECT:	ELECTRICAL SAFETY POLICY
DATE OF MEETING:	12 May 2026
APPROVED BY:	Paul Martin (CEO)
VERSION NUMBER:	1
DATE OF LATEST VERSION:	April 2021

ELECTRICAL SAFETY POLICY

HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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MS/MAY2026/REF P84

ELECTRICAL SAFETY POLICY

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1 MILNBANK HOUSING ASSOCIATION (MHA) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MHA's mission is to provide excellent homes and services in a thriving community. We believe that people living in the MHA community should:

- Have warm, safe, and affordable homes, and receive excellent services from MHA.
- Live in neighbourhoods that are clean and well cared for, with real community pride.
- Have access to opportunities and services that promote a good quality of life.

2 MHA's VALUES

Working as 'One Milnbank' so that we offer the same quality of services, support and housing to all tenants and residents.

3 LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The Management Committee leads and directs MHA to ensure good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. The Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework Financial & Regulatory, Standard 4 states that the governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose. MHA adheres to all relevant legal employment requirements associated with this policy.

4 POLICY INTRODUCTION

The main aim of Milnbank Housing Association's (MHA) electrical safety policy is to set out specific guidance to ensure the safety of fixed electrical installations and portable appliances within properties owned, leased, factored and used for commercial reasons by Milnbank Housing Association.

Milnbank Housing Association recognises its responsibility to comply with the current legislation and implement a plan for all installations within properties owned and managed by MHA.

The Policy is intended for all property types under MHA's control that contain electrical installations and fittings within the premises and any electrical equipment provided by MHA.

In addition, the Policy sets out to ensure that all persons are protected from harm which could be caused by misuse of, or by faulty, electrical equipment

belonging to the Organisation and formal safe working procedures are followed when performing maintenance on electrical equipment.

5 DEFINITIONS

"Competent Person" – person suitably trained and qualified by knowledge and practical experience, and provided with the necessary instructions, to enable the required task (s) to be carried out correctly.

For electrical work, using a firm or electrician that is a member of an accredited registration scheme operated by a recognised body (e.g. NICEIC or SELECT) will give some degree of confidence that the firm and/or person is competent.

6 LEGISLATION & REFERENCES

- British Standard BS7671:2018+A2:2022
- The Consumer Protection Act 1987
- Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Housing Scotland Act 2006
- IET Wiring Regulations 18th Edition
- IET 5th Edition COP for In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment
- indg236 (rev3) Maintaining Portable Electric equipment in low risk environments Portable Appliance Testing
- Maintaining portable electrical equipment, HSG107 3rd Edition. 2013. ISBN 978 0 7176 6606 5

7 LANDLORDS DUTIES

MHA have a legal duty to ensure that electrical installations, fixtures, fittings, and any electrical equipment provided, is safe at the start of the tenancy and throughout its duration.

7.1 Electrical Checks

Visual

MHA carry out visual inspections on all electrical appliances at the beginning of a tenancy. Checks will also include common areas (such as stairways, corridors, door entry system etc.) When carrying out visual check MHA staff members will look out for the following:

- Broken accessories (such as sockets and light switches);
- Signs of blackness or scorching around sockets due to overloading;
- Overheating of electrical equipment;

- A smell of hot plastic or burning near a socket;
- Signs of sparks or smoke coming from a plug or appliance;
- Damaged cables to portable electrical appliances or trailing cables/flexes;
- Damages to the circuit breaker protecting the circuit.

The majority of dangerous defects in electrical appliances can be identified by carrying out these simple checks. MHA will arrange for any defects to be repaired or replaced immediately by a competent person.

Periodic Inspections

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) should be carried out by a competent person (consideration should be given to membership of professional bodies) every 5 years or at the change of occupancy. Where a change of tenancy occurs after a short period (for example less than 6 months) of letting, a full periodic inspection and test may not be required.

Inspections should examine all installations for the supply of electricity and associated fittings, including -

- The consumer unit (or fuse box);
- All switches;
- Socket outlets;
- Light fittings;
- Any visible wiring.

A visual examination of Fixed electrical equipment should also be carried out, including:

- Fixed electrical heating equipment e.g. storage or panel heaters;
- Boilers and other heat producing equipment;
- Electric showers and over/under-sink water heaters;
- Hard-wired smoke and fire detectors.

The EICR should contain details of the following:

- The inspection and testing undertaken;
- The outcomes of the inspection and testing;
- Recommendations as to what remedial action (if any) is required;
- A declaration of whether or not the installation is safe for continued use.

The EICR should highlight any problems using different classifications: code C1 indicating 'danger present', code C2 indicating 'potentially dangerous' and code FI indicating 'further investigation required'. Any remedial work

that is undertaken as a result of the inspection should then be recorded on a **Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate**.

Portable Appliances

MHA are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that all appliances such as electric kettles, fridges and washing machines within commercial premises are safe. With regards to appliances used within tenanted properties MHA cannot control every device purchased by tenants for personal use. However, staff must remain vigilant when visiting properties to look out for suspicious devices and advise tenants to ensure they are fit for purpose.

If supplying any electrical devices to premises MHA should ensure that all portable appliances have the UKCA Mark or CE mark. Some may have additional safety marks, such as the British Standard Kitemark or the 'BEAB Approved' mark. These signs indicate that the equipment has been assessed by an independent body and meets the relevant product standard.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

If MHA provides appliances, Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) should be carried out on these items to ensure equipment is safe for continued use. PAT should be carried out by a competent person, either:

- An electrician registered with one of the Government-approved schemes, or
- A person (which can include the landlord) who has completed PAT training.

The PAT test requires a label for each appliance tested. These appliances may include:

- Electrical white goods (such as refrigerators and washing machines);
- Electrical brown goods (such as televisions and DVD players);
- Electric fires that are not fixed in place;
- Kitchen appliances, such as toaster and kettles;
- Hand held electrical equipment, such as hairdryers;
- Any other appliances provided by the landlord that are not permanently connected to the electrical installation.

Any appliance that fails the test must be replaced or repaired immediately.

7.2 Inspection Records

MHA must receive and retain a copy of the EICR and PAT report for six years. A copy of the most recent EICR and PAT report must be given to the tenant before a tenancy starts. If an inspection is carried out during a tenancy, a copy relating to that inspection must also be given to the tenant.

7.3 Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate

In some cases landlords may have a copy of a Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate (MEIWC). MEIWC provide landlords, with a declaration that the new installation, alteration or addition, is safe to use at the time it is put into service. These certificates, if retained, also provide a basis for any further inspection and testing, as they can help save on costly exploratory work which might otherwise be needed in future.

7.4 Fire Alarms & Emergency Lighting

MHA must ensure that there is a fire alarm system and emergency lighting system installed (where required) to reduce the risk of fire causing harm to tenants. Regular inspections and testing should be carried out by a competent person.

7.5 Tenant Responsibilities

Tenants are responsible for reporting any electrical faults or observations to their landlord.

If a fault is identified, tenants should turn off the appliance immediately and keep the item out of use until it has been repaired or replaced.

Tenants should be advised to turn off electrical switches when they are not in use and not to overload plug sockets with multi-point adapters.

8 EMPLOYER DUTIES

8.1 Electrical Equipment Inspection and Testing

5.1.1 MHA should nominate an external Contractor as a Competent Person who should be responsible for identifying all electrical equipment. Each item shall be tagged and given a unique identification number, and logged in the record book (asset register) kept for all electrical equipment. Any new or used electrical equipment brought for or on to the Organisation premises shall be tagged, logged and inspected prior to being used (including private items brought in by employees).

8.1.2 The Competent Person shall undertake a risk assessment of all electrical equipment to determine the frequency of Inspection and Testing. The assessment shall look at the conditions of use for each piece of equipment together with the guidance given in the IET Code of Practice for the In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment. See table 1 within Appendix 1.

8.1.3 Where "PASS" labels are attached to the equipment following formal inspection and/or test, these shall be labelled as "Safety Check" together with the person carrying out the checks initials. Re-test dates shall not be applied.

8.1.4 All employees shall be responsible for undertaking visual inspections only of all electrical equipment prior to its use. Where any employee has any concerns as to the safe condition of electrical equipment, it should not be used and the Competent Person informed immediately.

8.1.5 The use of extension leads shall not be used unless authorised by the Competent Person, and limited to occasional use only. Extension leads should be of sufficient length and not joined together. The use of coiled extension leads shall not be used within offices. Where there is a need to permanently locate electrical equipment away from sockets, the Competent Person should be informed and permanent wiring solution sought.

8.1.6 Any new or used electrical equipment brought on to the premises will be tagged, logged and checked prior to being used. No employee shall use personal electrical items without first registering the appliance with the Competent Person.

8.2 Isolation of Equipment

8.2.1 Before inspection or repair work on any electrical item, it will be necessary to effectively isolate it from the power supply.

8.2.2 Contractors must comply with 2.1. The method used to isolate will depend on the assessment made by the Contractor.

8.3 Monitoring

8.3.1 The Director will ensure all staff are trained and suitably instructed in the safe use of electrical apparatus and instructed not to use damaged or defective items.

8.3.2 All employees should observe electrical equipment in use for signs of cable damage, loose plugs, sparks from light switches, cracked casings and overlong trailing cables.

8.3.3 Should any faulty equipment be observed, it will be immediately reported to the Competent Person who will take the item out of service until it is repaired or replaced. Items, which cannot be moved, will be isolated and labelled, e.g.

DANGER – DO NOT USE. All such actions will be recorded and the record kept alongside the Record Book.

8.4 Competent Persons

8.4.1 Staff must not attempt electrical repairs of any nature irrespective of how trivial the repair may seem.

8.4.2 The Organisation will ensure that Service Contractors employed for inspection and repair work are competent within the terms of the Regulations and are members of recognised professional bodies.

8.5 Staff Procedures

8.5.1 Staff can assist in ensuring electrical safety within the organisation by:

- not overloading any power point by use of multi-point adapters.
- keeping high housekeeping standards around any electrical items such as wall heaters, photocopiers, DSE equipment etc.
- not tampering with, removing or transferring marking labels on electrical items.
- following all the guidelines outlined above and complying with the Organisation's electrical policy.

8.6 Fixed Electrical Installation

8.6.1 The Competent Person will arrange for all fixed electrical installation (wiring, sockets, fuses, switchboards etc.) to be subject to a periodic inspection and testing regime. This regime will include routine checks and formal Inspection and Testing programmes

8.6.2 Routine checks need not be carried out by electrically skilled persons and are intended to take the form of simple visual inspections for obvious signs of problems. The checks will identify wear and tear, breakages, missing parts, signs of overheating and any other abnormal observation. Formal Inspection and Testing must be carried out by a competent person and will include careful scrutiny of the installation, supplemented by testing to verify compliance. Records of all such checks and inspections should be filed by the Competent Person.

8.6.3 Should any installation be seen to be faulty, corrective action will be taken as appropriate. Advice will be sought from a competent person where necessary.

8.6.4 The frequency of such tests will be in accordance with that set out in the Electrical Installation Certificate for the premises. Refer to table 2 within Appendix 1.

9 EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

MHA's is committed to equal opportunities, and we will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals, and we will not discriminate against any individual for any reason outlined in Equality & Human Rights Legislation.

10 DATA COLLECTION

MHA will manage all personal data in accordance with our obligations under the GDPR regulations and the Association's Policy.

11 POLICY MONITORING & REVIEW

The Electrical Safety Policy be reviewed by the Management Board on an triennial basis or as otherwise deemed necessary. In addition, the policy will be amended in accordance with EVH/ACS updates

Appendix 1

Table 1 – Periodicity for Portable Appliance Testing

Equipment/Environment	User Checks	Formal Visual Inspection	Combined Inspection and Testing
Battery operated: Less than 40 volts	No	No	No
Extra low voltage: Less than 50 volts AC; Telephone equipment, low-voltage desk lights	No	No	No
Desktop computers, DSE	No	Yes, two to four years	No, if double insulated, otherwise up to five years
Photocopiers, fax machines: Not hand-held. Rarely moved	No	Yes, two to four years	No, if double insulated, otherwise up to five years
Double insulated ⧈ (Class II) equipment; Not hand-held. Moved occasionally, eg fans, table lamps	No	Yes, two to four years	No
Double insulated ⧈ (Class II) equipment; Hand-held, eg some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment	Yes	Yes, six months to one year	No
Earthed equipment (Class I). Electric kettles, some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment and irons	Yes	Yes, six months to one year	Yes, one to two years
Cables (leads and plugs connected to the above) and mains voltage extension leads and battery charging equipment	Yes	Yes, six months to four years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, one to five years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to

Table 2 – Periodicity for Fixed Electrical Installation Inspection and Testing

Offices		
i)	Routine checks	Annually
ii)	Inspection and test	Every five years
Residential Accommodation		
i)	Routine checks	Annually
ii)	Inspection and test	Every five years
Domestic Premises		
i)	Routine checks	None (responsibility of occupier)
ii)	Inspection and test	Change of tenancy/every five years