

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 2nd November 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Electrical Compliance

Report summary:

To provide an update to the Housing Review Board on our position in relation to electrical compliance

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

1. For the Board to note the revision of the Electrical Safety Policy
2. The Board to have oversight of the Housing Services' Compliance & Electrical Safety policy and procedures.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure high level governance & oversight of compliance

Officer: Michelle Davidson – Compliance & Cyclical Servicing Manager

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Communications and Democracy
- Economy
- Finance and Assets
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Non-compliance with Electrical Safety poses a risk to tenant's & the Council; this however is being managed through our electrical recovery plan as outlined in this report.

Links to background information [Housing Review Board 15th June 2023](#)

[Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1. East Devon District Council currently has a housing stock of 4176 properties, which are managed by Housing's Property & Asset team. The properties are a mixture of sheltered & general needs across the East Devon District.
2. The Compliance & Cyclical Servicing team are responsible for ensuring the Council's Housing stock is compliant with statutory legislation & ensuring we deliver better homes & communities for all.
3. On 15th June 2023 the Housing Review Board were alerted to non-compliance regarding electrical safety & were presented with our performance indicator dashboard & a summary on findings & actions in place to address non-compliance.

Electrical Testing

4. As previously advised, upon review of electrical testing, the five-year periodic inspection regime had not been re-procured in a timely manner which unfortunately led to a delay in the re-testing of our stock. Following the review, a new contract with our previous contractor The Dodd Group, was re-procured & testing recommenced in June 2023 with a full recovery programme put in place to ensure full compliance with five-year periodic testing. We had hoped to achieve full compliance by the end of September 2023 however due to a high volume of no accesses this has impacted the recovery programme.
5. As at 15th June 2023, 531 Electrical Periodic Inspections were overdue from 2022 – 2023 testing year. The Dodd Group have already been able to access 457 properties to carry out the required testing with 74 non-compliant properties still to be accessed. We are currently working through our no access procedure with The Dodd Group to gain access the 74 overdue properties.
6. We have prioritised the overdue tests from 2022-2023, therefore a number of properties which were due to have their five-year electrical periodic inspection this year have become overdue. The Dodd Group have commenced testing on these properties which are overdue since April 2023. We initially prioritised properties which were Sheltered however the Dodd Group are now working through all remaining properties which are due to have their test carried out this financial year with 270 properties currently non-compliant, the number continues to reduce.
7. Full compliance with five-year periodic inspection/testing should be reached by beginning of November 2023 however this is subject to The Dodd Group gaining access to tenant's properties on first access attempt.
8. The Compliance Surveyor (Services) is monitoring the contract closely with the Dodd Group through weekly meetings & information sharing & formal operational meetings are held regularly.

Electrical Remedials

9. Following a thorough review of the overdue electrical testing, a volume of repairs were identified. Through a number of procurement exercises, these repairs have been issued to Elite Electrical & The MD Group to undertake the work to ensure The Dodd Group are able to focus on the testing programme.
10. Elite are working through the remaining 145 properties with outstanding remedials from Year 3 & these will have completed by 25th November 2023, albeit any no access issues.
11. The MD Group are working through the remaining 75 properties with outstanding remedials from Year 4 & 427 properties from Year 5. Year 4 is due to complete by December 2023 & Year 5 by March 2024, albeit no access issues. Unfortunately due to a procurement issue the award of the contract for Year 5 was delayed however this has been resolved & the contract was awarded to the MD Group.
12. All communal buildings are now fully compliant.

Monitoring

13. A root cause analysis was carried out by the Assistant Director of Housing to investigate the failings & to ensure measures were in place to provide greater assurance going forward. As part of this root cause analysis external legal advice was sought. Following receipt of the legal advice East Devon District Council self-referred to Social Housing Regulator for non-compliance with the Consumer Standards – electrical safety.
14. We are currently working closely with the Social Housing Regulator whilst we regain compliance & are in regular contact with them with regards to our position. They are providing support and guidance which is strengthening our position further.
15. High level weekly monitoring of compliance with electrical safety is undertaken between the Assistant Director of Housing & The Compliance & Cyclical Servicing Team Manager, this is also reported to the Senior Management Team & The Portfolio Holder for Homes and Communities.
16. We have reviewed our approach to monitoring compliance & to ensure a high level of Governance we have implemented a newly defined compliance dashboard. This dashboard is presented to leadership who have full oversight of all areas of compliance. The new dashboard is assisting the Compliance team operationally to ensure that we are able to monitor progress with compliance more effectively.
17. A log of all current contracts, their end date & what action is being taken to re-procure these is now presented to Leadership to ensure they have greater oversight.

Summary

18. Overall, the increased monitoring of compliance will ensure that our contractors are adhering to statutory testing/servicing regimes. With the higher level monitoring of the electrical recovery plan this will ensure the Council regains full compliance with this area in the time frame set out in this report.
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Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Legal implications:

The implications if the Service does not comply with statutory and regulatory process and procedures is set out within the report and requires no further comment.