

# **Practical Fire Safety Guidance for existing Specialised Housing and similar accommodation**

**January 2020**



**Scottish Government**  
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## FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY SUMMARY TEMPLATE

<b>Title of Policy, Strategy, Programme etc</b>	Practical Fire Safety Guidance for existing Specialised Housing and similar accommodation.
<b>Summary of aims and expected outcomes of strategy, proposal, programme or policy</b>	<p>The aim is to enhance fire safety in specialised housing and similar premises thereby preventing fires and reducing deaths and injuries from fires where they occur. The main objective is to provide a single source of Guidance covering general fire safety and fire safety risk assessment to assist those responsible to determine appropriate fire safety measures for vulnerable people.</p> <p>The Review of Fire Safety in Scotland involved a range of organisations and individuals to draw on relevant knowledge and experience. The Review Team comprised the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) and Scottish Government Officials from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire and Rescue Unit, Safer Communities</li> <li>• Better Homes, Building and Fire Safety</li> <li>• Legal Division</li> </ul> <p>An Advisory Group was formed with external organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)</li> <li>• Social and private housing providers</li> <li>• Representative organisations</li> <li>• Chartered Institute of Housing</li> <li>• Fire Brigades Union</li> </ul> <p>Specifically for the Specialised Housing Guidance, preliminary meetings and a pre-consultation engagement event were held with the following partners and stakeholders prior to drafting.</p> <p>Scottish Government Officials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Standards Division</li> <li>• Adults Social Care Policy</li> <li>• Housing Services</li> <li>• Better Homes – service policy</li> <li>• Better Homes – supported accommodation</li> </ul> <p>External Partners / Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scottish Housing Regulator</li> <li>• Care Inspectorate</li> <li>• COSLA</li> </ul>

- Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) – Housing Support Enabling Unit
- Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA)

A public consultation on the draft Practical Fire Safety Guidance for existing Specialised Housing and similar accommodation document took place between July and October 2019. 38 respondents provided feedback, which included:

Housing Associations (and umbrella organisations)

- COSLA
- Local Authorities
- Private Housing Providers
- Care Providers
- Health and Social Care Partnerships
- Care Inspectorate
- SFRS
- Fire Safety / protection / insurance companies
- Individuals

During the public consultation period, 3 engagement events took place:

- Presentation / Workshop with CCPS Housing Support Enabling Unit on 27 August 2019
- Presentation and questions with SFRS on 18 September 2019
- Presentation and questions with Wheatley Group and other care/support agencies on 8 October 2019

Question 29 of the consultation asked respondents to “Please give information and your views on impacts on groups with protected characteristics... that implementation of the Guidance might have. This should include both positive and negative.” 8 respondents agreed that groups with protected characteristics would benefit from improvements to fire safety, with a care and support provider confirming that the language used in the guidance is non-discriminatory.

One housing association felt that the mobility of older people may be detrimentally affected if the numbers of mobility scooters have to be restricted for reasons of fire safety. In addition one advice agency was concerned that landlords may avoid making improvements for financial reasons, thereby reducing the availability of specialised housing and increasing pressures on care homes and hospitals.

<p><b>Summary of evidence</b></p>	<p>The Guidance will impact positively by strengthening fire safety for people who live in specialised housing and similar accommodation and will also contribute to reducing “inequalities of outcome” caused by socio-economic disadvantage.</p> <p>People in areas of multiple deprivation are at higher risk of fire. Fire casualty rates are 4.9 times higher in the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland compared to the 20% least deprived.</p> <p>The data indicates that majority of specialised housing and similar premises is social housing (Housing Statistics Annual Key Trends (2019) and Scottish Housing Regulator: Stock Provision for Year end March (2019)).</p> <p>A higher proportion of people in relative poverty live in social housing compared to other housing tenures. 41% of people in relative poverty live in social housing, compared to 26% privately rented and 33% owned property (Rent Affordability in the Affordable Housing Sector: Literature Review; Scottish Government 2017).</p> <p>Most specialised housing is provided for older people and most people receiving social care are aged over 75 (Insights into Social Care in Scotland, ISD 2019). Almost one in five (18%) of people on an old age pension are in relative poverty (Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2015-2018; Scottish Government 2019).</p>
<p><b>Summary of assessment findings</b></p>	<p>The Guidance aims to improve fire safety in specialised housing and similar premises. There are a high proportion of people in relative poverty in this type of housing, so the Guidance will particularly improve fire safety for them, and contribute to reducing inequalities in outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Sign off</b></p>	<p><b>Name: Wendy Wilkinson</b></p> <p><b>Job title: Deputy Director Safer Communities</b></p>



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