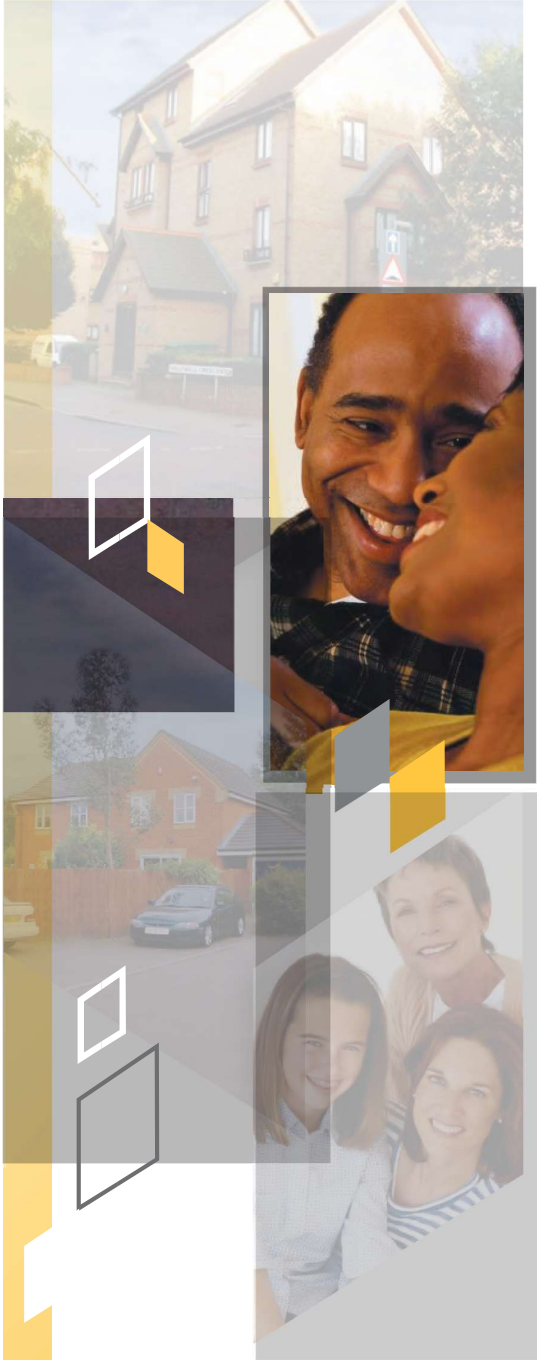




## NEW RESIDENTS WELCOME PACK

# SMART HOUSING GROUP: NEW 'RESIDENTS' WELCOME PACK



## CONTENTS:

1. DISCLAIMER
2. INTRODUCTION
3. ESSENTIAL CONTACT INFORMATION AND MAP
4. SMART HOUSING GROUP'S TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OCCUPATION
5. SMART HOUSING GROUP'S COMMITMENT TO ITS 'RESIDENTS'
6. YOUR 'TENANCY'
7. KEYS POLICY
8. REPORTING REPAIRS
9. HOME VISITS/ PERIODIC PROPERTY INSPECTIONS
10. GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTING AND CERTIFICATION
11. COUNCIL TAX AND UTILITY SUPPLIES
12. INSURANCE
13. SECURING YOUR HOME
14. DISPOSAL OF RUBBISH
15. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS
16. PETS
17. GARDEN MAINTENANCE
18. CARS AND PARKING
19. PEST CONTROL AND DOMESTIC HYGIENE
20. TV LICENCING AND SATELLITE TELEVISION SERVICES
21. BANNED SUBSTANCES & DRUGS
22. FLAMMABLE/ COMBUSTIBLE AND EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS
23. DAMP AND CONDENSATION
24. IMPORTANT NOTICES
25. COMPLAINTS
26. ENDING YOUR 'TENANCY'
27. BELONGINGS LEFT IN THE PROPERTY AT THE END OF YOUR 'TENANCY'
28. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION
29. SHG EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY
30. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT
31. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY
- 32 SUMMARY OF OUR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

## 1: DISCLAIMER

Please note that the use of the terms 'resident'; 'residents'; 'tenancy' or 'tenancies' anywhere within these documents or other Smart Housing Group literature is merely for convenience and ease of reader understanding. Such terms are not used with the intention of conveying or implying any strict legal interpretation of those terms. The temporary accommodation provided by Smart Housing Group is, in reality, always occupied on the basis of a licence rather than a tenancy, and occupiers will therefore be 'licensees' rather than actual 'residents'.

## 2: INTRODUCTION

### **Welcome to Smart Housing Group.**

This Welcome Pack has been prepared as a reference guide for your stay with us. It contains useful information about your new home, together with information on your rights and responsibilities (as well as those of Smart Housing Group), and, of course, important contact information.

Please keep the Welcome Pack to hand for future reference. The Welcome Pack should contain the answers to many of the questions you might have both now and in the future. However, if you cannot find the answer to your query within this pack, then please feel free to contact a member of Smart Housing Group's staff who will try and answer any queries you might have as quickly as possible.

**NB** Below is the text of the standard letter that is normally given to all new 'residents' when they first move in to any temporary accommodation that is managed by Smart Housing Group.

*Dear Guest,*

### Welcome to Your Temporary Accommodation

Smart Housing Group is providing you with this accommodation on behalf of your local council. The accommodation is provided on a temporary basis until such time as the council is able to determine your housing application and/ or housing needs. Accordingly, you should be aware that if you have any questions regarding your housing application and/ or housing needs assessment, such questions can only be answered by officers from your local council.

We hope that you will be comfortable in our accommodation and settle in to your new environment without too much difficulty. However, we understand that moving into a new home, possibly in an unfamiliar area, can be both difficult and stressful. Therefore we would like to stress that if you require help with anything relating to your use and occupation of our accommodation, you are always welcome to contact a member of our Housing Management Team - based in our offices in north-London, at:

**18-20 Froggnal, London, NW3 6AG**

**Our office telephone number is: 020-8482-5511**

Normal office hours are from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm Monday to Friday and from 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays, but in the event of an emergency (such as a burst pipe) occurring outside normal office hours, then you should telephone our emergency call out service on: **07773 284 405**

Please note that this number is for genuine emergency use only, and that non-urgent matters should be reported during the next normal working day.

Your anticipated co-operation in not abusing the emergency call out service is greatly appreciated.

Finally, just to remind you that if there is anything we can reasonably do to help you during your stay with us, we are here to help: please feel free to contact us.

*Yours sincerely,*

***Smart Housing Group***

### 3: ESSENTIAL CONTACT INFORMATION AND MAP

#### How to contact Smart Housing Group...

Our Address...

**18-20 Frognal, London, NW3 6AG**

Our Opening hours...

Monday to Friday 9:30 am – 6:00 pm, and

Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00pm

Repairs and Maintenance Requests...

Inform your Tenancy Management Officer in person when you next meet with them at your regular home visit

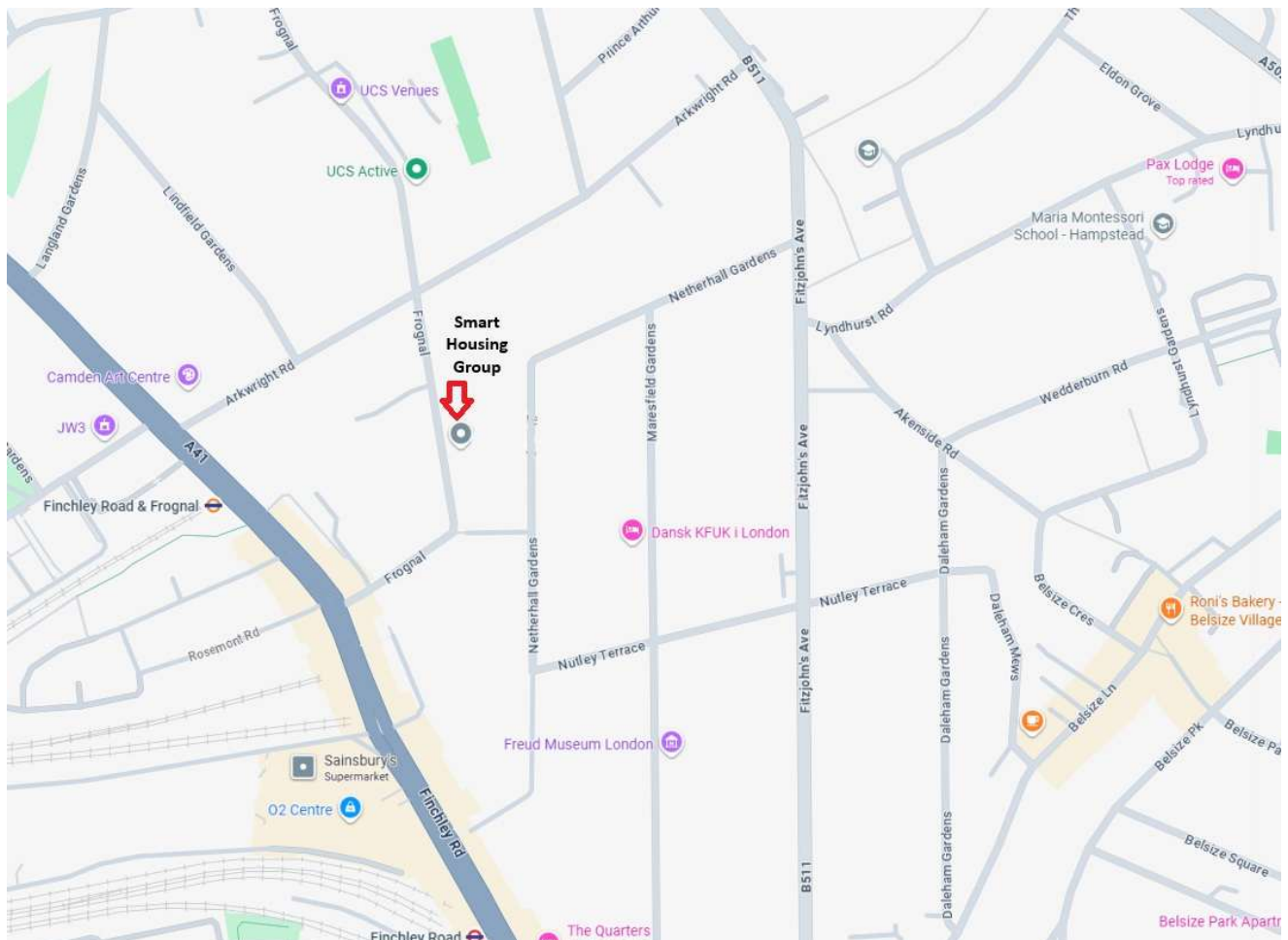
Report your repair or maintenance issue by telephone:

020 8482 5511 (office hours only)

Out of Hours Emergencies...

Telephone: 07773 284 405

**NB This number should only be used in genuine emergencies such as a fire or a flood and should not be used to report non-essential repairs or maintenance issues.**



#### 4: TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OCCUPATION

1. These Premises are only available for use as temporary accommodation on the basis of a Licence or other form of non-secure tenancy.
2. No relationship of landlord and resident is involved and there is no right to buy.
3. If, for any reason, Smart Housing Group Limited is required to seek possession via the Courts, the Company will ask the Court to make an order for Costs against the Licensee.
4. Any keys or access fobs issued to you in respect of your accommodation remain the property of Smart Housing Group and must be surrendered upon your departure. Smart Housing Group accepts no responsibility for the loss or theft of such keys or access fobs once they have been issued, and any costs incurred as a result of same remain the direct responsibility of the Licensee.
5. Smart Housing Group only grants the authorised Licensee permission to occupy the premises on the following terms (the Licensee's Obligations):-

##### The Licensee hereby agrees: -

**Access** (a) to allow the Licensors and the freeholders and anyone with proper reason to require access to the Premises and their employees agents or contractors access at all times and for all purposes

**Use of Premises** (b) to use the Premises for residential purposes only as the Licensee's only home and that of his/her family and not to operate a business at the Premises or to use the Premises for any other purpose.

##### Cleanliness &

**Internal Decoration** (c) to keep the interior and windows of the Premises and all furnishings fitted carpets and floor coverings in the Premises and any garden garage or land appurtenant to the Premises in a good and clean condition and to carry out any repair work and maintenance of a minor nature

**NB** during the term of the Licence period Smart Housing Group Limited will not normally undertake any internal redecoration of the premises and will also not normally undertake the replacement of any furniture or carpeting or floor coverings or curtains etc

**Food Storage** (d) not to store any items or quantity of food in such a way as may be deemed to encourage insect, pest or vermin infestations (all food stuffs must be stored in sealed containers)

**Nuisance** (e) not to cause or allow members of the Licensee's household or invited visitors to cause a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or other Licensees of the Licensors and not to commit any form of harassment on the grounds of race colour religion sex sexual orientation or disability

**Noise** (f) not to play or allow to be played any radio, television, record, tape or CD recording or any musical instrument so loudly that it causes a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or can be heard outside the Premises between the hours of 11.00pm and 7.30am

**Outgoings** (g) to pay all gas, electricity, water and telephone and other charges levied in respect of the Premises including any Community Charge or Council Tax or other tax replacing the same for the period of the Licence (unless otherwise advised in writing)

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pets</b>                 | (h) not to keep any pets at the Premises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Damage</b>               | (i) to make good any damage or loss to the Premises or to any stairways corridors or entrance halls serving the Premises caused by the Licensee or any member of the Licensee's household or any invited visitor to the Premises and to pay any costs incurred by the Licensor in carrying out such work in default                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Reporting Disrepair</b>  | (j) to report to the Licensor or its agents promptly any disrepair or defect in the structure or exterior of the Premises or in any installation or in any stairways corridors or entrance halls serving the Premises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Alterations</b>          | (k) not to make any alterations to the premises, structural or otherwise, without the written permission of Smart Housing Group Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Satellite Television</b> | (l) not to install or make arrangements for the installation of a satellite television dish without the written permission of Smart Housing Group Limited                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Rubbish</b>              | (m) not to allow the accumulation or dumping of rubbish and/or discarded goods within the Premises or any land appurtenant to the Premises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>General Storage</b>      | (n) not to leave or store any items in any common parts eg. stairwells, halls or landings. (Any such items found in contravention of this clause will be removed or destroyed without further notice.)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Assignment</b>           | (o) not to allow anyone other than an authorised member of the Licensee's family to occupy the Premises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Posters</b>              | (p) not to affix posters signs or notices on the exterior of the Premises or on the inside so as to be visible from the exterior                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Overcrowding</b>         | (q) not to allow more than the maximum number of occupants to reside at the Premises                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Moving Out</b>           | (r) at the end of the Sub-Licence to give the Licensor vacant possession and return the keys of the Premises and to remove all personal possessions and rubbish and leave the Premises in a clean and tidy condition and proper state of repair and to pay to the Licensor the cost of repairing or replacing any damaged or missing parts of the Premises. <b>(The Licensor accepts no responsibility for anything left at the Premises by the Licensee at the end of this Sub-Licence)</b> |
| <b>Acknowledgement</b>      | The Licensee acknowledges that failure to carry out any of the above obligations could render the Licensee and the Licensee's family to eviction and the consequent discharge by the Council of its responsibility for providing accommodation under the homeless legislation                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

## 5 SMART HOUSING GROUP'S COMMITMENT TO ITS 'RESIDENTS'

**Smart Housing Group (SHG) is committed to providing the highest standard of service possible. As such, you can expect the following from us:**

- All SHG staff should normally carry an official Smart Housing Group identity card (including a photograph of the bearer) which should be made available to you upon request
- Our staff should be courteous and polite at all times
- A member of SHG staff will either accompany you when you initially move in to your new accommodation, or will sometimes meet you there the next day. This will provide us with an opportunity

to provide you with essential practical information about your new home and to answer any questions you might have.

- You will be allocated a named Tenancy Management Officer who will be your principal point of contact with Smart Housing Group.
- Your Tenancy Management Officer will need to visit you at your new home either once a week (if your accommodation is booked on a Nightly Let Scheme and we are required to obtain your signature(s) for the Council's weekly register) or once every 4-8 weeks (if your accommodation is booked on a Private Sector Leasing (PSL) Scheme; Private Licenced Accommodation (PLA) Scheme; or Non-Secure Tenancy (NST) Scheme).
- Smart Housing Group staff will be well trained and competent to complete the job required of them
- We will work constructively with any necessary organisations or third parties to help provide a continued high standard of service and support during your stay
- The structure and exterior of your accommodation will be properly maintained and repairs carried out in a timely and professional manner with due regard to health and safety.
- We will endeavour to return all telephone calls promptly and in any event within 48 hours
- We will endeavour to reply to any emails promptly and in any event within 48 hours
- We will endeavour to reply to any letters that may be sent to us promptly and in any event within 10 working days
- We will respect your right to confidentiality
- We will consult with you on any matters affecting your 'tenancy'
- We will provide an out of hours (ie. 24 hour) EMERGENCY repairs service
- We will always listen to what you have to say and wherever possible try to work with you to resolve any issue you might have
- If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of Smart Housing Group's performance or conduct we support and encourage your right to register a complaint – details of how to do this are included elsewhere in this pack.

## 6. YOUR 'TENANCY'

The local authority housing Department that you approached for housing assistance (ie. your own council) has procured the accommodation you now occupy for your temporary housing needs through Smart Housing Group. Because it is only intended as temporary or interim accommodation your occupation is governed by way of a Licence. You do not have the same security of tenure that you would have with a permanent offer of accommodation from either the Council itself, or from a Housing Association or other Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

You have the right to remain in occupation of your temporary accommodation only until either the Council or Smart Housing Group informs you that you must leave.

### **You do not have the right to apply to:**

- Buy your home
- Take in lodgers
- Sublet all or part of your home
- Make improvements or alterations
- Redecorate internally or externally

- Overcrowd the property
- Exchange your home
- Use the premises for any business purposes

**You must:**

- Continue to occupy your temporary accommodation as your principal home at all times
- Accept responsibility for the behaviour and actions of everyone living with you or who visits you
- Try to maintain the property and its general appearance to the same standard and condition that it was in when you first moved in

**You must not:**

- Keep or use liquid petroleum gas cylinders, paraffin, bottled gas, or store petrol scooters in your home
- Remove furniture, carpets, curtains or white goods from your temporary accommodation without written permission from Smart Housing Group (you will be held liable for the cost of replacing all such items at the end of your 'tenancy')
- Remove batteries from (or otherwise disable) fire or smoke detection equipment, and/ or CO2 detectors in your home
- Block ventilation grills or air bricks
- Dry damp washing over electric storage heaters
- Overcrowd your home with furniture and other possessions (this will restrict airflow and could cause damp and condensation especially if such items are stored against an outside wall)

**Please do:**

- Keep to your terms and conditions of occupation and licence conditions
- Look after your home and keep it clean and free from rubbish
- Ventilate your property so as to avoid damp and condensation
- Keep your garden or any outside areas neat and tidy, and free from rubbish
- Help keep any communal spaces clean and tidy, and free from rubbish
- Keep your windows clean
- Dispose of rubbish and waste appropriately
- Use recycling facilities where they are available
- Show consideration and respect for your neighbours

**Please do not:**

- Become a nuisance to your neighbours (or allow any member of your household, or any visitors to your household, to become a nuisance)
- Allow, permit or condone rude or offensive language or behaviour by any member of your household, or any visitors to your household

## 7. KEYS POLICY

Smart Housing Group will normally provide only one set of keys in respect of any allocated property.

The 'resident(s)' is responsible for the safe keeping of any keys that they are given, and where necessary, the full cost of obtaining replacements (see below).

If additional keys (or sets of keys) are required by the new 'resident(s)' it is recommended that the 'resident(s)' purchase these direct from a reputable locksmith.

**NB** We strongly recommended that at least one set of additional keys is obtained and left with a relative or friend so that in the event of the original set being lost or stolen (or inadvertently locked-in the property) that a spare set is easily accessible.

No information which might reasonably identify the property address to which the key(s) relate should be attached to the key(s). This is so as to prevent the need for a lock change if the keys are inadvertently lost or stolen.

In the event that the household's key(s) becomes lost; stolen; or perhaps locked in the property, then it will be the 'residents' personal responsibility to either:

- (1) Arrange for a reputable locksmith to attend to the problem at their own expense, **or**
- (2) Notify Smart Housing Group of the fact and arrange to attend our offices during normal office hours with acceptable proof of identity in order to be issued with a duplicate set of keys (for which there will be a set charge of £5 per standard key and £15 (or more) for any special order keys - eg electronic fob or special order communal door keys).

Please also note that all such costs and/ or charges are required to be paid in cash at the time of collection.

**NB** Smart Housing Group is at all-times required to hold spare keys for each of the properties in its management. Therefore, should any of our 'resident(s)' ever have to undertake a lock change at their temporary accommodation they must immediately inform Smart Housing Group of that lock change, and provide our staff with a full set of the new keys at the earliest possible opportunity.

#### **IMPORTANT**

##### **Returning Keys When Moving Out:**

**The 'resident(s)' will remain liable for the full rent payable to the Council in respect of their temporary accommodation until they have personally handed back all their keys to Smart Housing Group.**

**Smart Housing Group will issue a properly signed and dated Key Receipt for all keys that are returned to us. This is an important document and should be retained for future reference (especially if the Council subsequently query your leaving date...).**

**Keys should never just be left in your temporary accommodation or sent in the post.**

## **8. REPORTING REPAIRS**

Any repairs or maintenance issues which might sometimes arise in your temporary accommodation should be reported to Smart Housing Group as soon as possible. If you do not do so the problem could get worse (or even cause damage to someone else's property) and therefore end-up costing much more to fix – if this were allowed to happen, then you would be held liable and required to contribute towards the cost of any additional expenses that had been incurred unnecessarily.

Smart Housing Group's own maintenance staff or its authorised sub-contractors (or perhaps the landlord or his or her own authorised sub-contractors) will aim to attend to and resolve all such matters in accordance with the time frames prescribed by the local authorities with whom we work.

**NB 1.** Please check the identity of anyone attending your home (all such trades personnel should carry identity cards) or, if in any doubt, please telephone Smart Housing Group to check...

**2.** Smart Housing Group will not normally repair any damage caused by:

- a. Anything you have done (whether that is a deliberate act or omission, or an accident)
- b. Anything done by anyone living with you (including children) or anyone who was visiting you (whether that is a deliberate act or omission, or an accident)
- c. Anything arising from something which you or members of your household etc have undertaken or installed in the property – with or without SHG permission

**Non-urgent repairs may be reported as follows:**

- By informing your Tenancy Management Officer when he/ she next visits you
- By phoning your Tenancy Management Officer on his/ her mobile number (this number will have been provided to you when you first move in)
- By phoning Smart Housing Group's office staff during normal office hours on: **020 8482 5511 Urgent**

**repairs may be reported as follows:**

- By phoning Smart Housing Group's office staff during normal office hours on: **020 8482 5511**
- Outside of normal office hours by phoning Smart Housing Group's emergency out of hours service on: **07773 284 405**

**NB** Our emergency out of hours' service is only available for genuine emergency calls only (eg. if you have a flood or major leak during the night then you should, of course, please use this number). However, if you use this service to report non-urgent repairs outside of normal office hours your repair request will not be dealt with and you will merely be advised that you must report your repair during normal office hours on our main switchboard number.

**When reporting repairs or maintenance issues please be prepared to provide the following information:**

- Your name
- Your address
- Your telephone number and/ or mobile telephone number
- Access availability
- As much accurate and detailed information about the nature of the repair as possible

**And**

**In the event that you discover a burst pipe, then please:**

- Turn the water off at the mains and/ or stopcock immediately
- Turn on all the taps to drain the system
- Telephone Smart Housing Group on:

020 8482 5511 or

07773 284 405 (out of office hours)

## 9. HOME VISITS/ PERIODIC PROPERTY INSPECTIONS

Smart Housing Group has been contracted to provide you with temporary accommodation by the local authority (the Council) dealing with your housing application.

Please note that this accommodation is only provided for your use on a temporary basis and is therefore never going to become your permanent home. As such you do not have the same kind of rights and security of tenure that you would have with permanent rehousing or even a private letting (an Assured Short-hold Tenancy (AST)), and you may be required to leave this accommodation at any time (subject to proper notice being issued). It is therefore extremely important throughout your temporary accommodation stay that you fully comply with and abide by all the stated terms and conditions associated with its provision: failure to do so could result in either the Council or Smart Housing Group ending your temporary accommodation provision. If this happened the consequences could be very serious; you might not be eligible for any further assistance from the Council; this would then necessitate you having to make your own private accommodation arrangements.

As part of Smart Housing Group's contractual arrangements with the Council for the management of your temporary accommodation our staff are required to routinely visit you in your home, at regularly specified intervals.

You are similarly required by the occupation agreement you sign with the Council, to fully comply with all Smart Housing Group's periodic property inspection/ home visit requests.

The intervals between home visits (or periodic property inspections) are determined by the individual agreements Smart Housing Group operates with each local authority. Generally, however, we are required to undertake most home visits (or periodic property inspections) on either a weekly, monthly or 6 weekly cycle.

You will be allocated a named Tenancy Management Officer (TMO) by Smart Housing Group shortly after you take-up occupation of your offer of temporary accommodation. Your Tenancy Management Officer will inform you as to how often he or she will need to visit you at home, and confirm the specific arrangements for the same.

It is important that you always try to make yourself available for any scheduled home visits/ property inspections wherever possible. Should you regularly fail to keep such appointments the Council may decide to end your temporary accommodation provision!

If for any reason you cannot keep any scheduled appointment for a home visit/ period property inspection you should try to rearrange the appointment with your named TMO at the earliest possible mutually convenient date and time thereafter.

Please note that home visits can usually only be arranged during normal office hours ie. Monday to Friday from 9:30 am to 5pm.

If any appointment for a home visit/ periodic property inspection is not kept, or rearranged, then Smart Housing Group reserves the right for its staff to access its temporary accommodation in your absence.

**NB** Tenancy management Officers are required to inspect/ access every room in your temporary accommodation. Tenancy Management Officers need, amongst other things, to be able to verify that you continue to occupy the property as your principal residence; that you are not sub-letting; that you are not allowing people other than those detailed on your housing application to reside with you; that you do not permit or cause overcrowding of your temporary accommodation; that you are looking after the property appropriately and not permitting or causing abuse or neglect of the property; that you are abiding by all the terms and conditions attached to your occupation agreement; and that any repairs and maintenance issues that are the responsibility of the landlord or Smart Housing Group are identified promptly so that they can be dealt with without undue delay.

## **10. GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY TESTING AND CERTIFICATION**

There is a legal requirement within the UK for all rented property to have appropriate testing undertaken of specified services on a regular or periodic basis by suitably qualified personnel.

Any rented property that has an operational gas supply is subject to an annual Landlord's Gas Safety Inspection by a registered Gas Safe Engineer.

All properties that are let as temporary accommodation on behalf of a local authority are periodically required to have their electrical installations tested by a NICEIC registered electrical contractor (or equivalent) – albeit that this is not necessarily an annual test/ inspection.

Such testing is necessary to ensure that the supply of such services conforms to current UK standards and will therefore provide a suitably safe environment for all the occupiers within the accommodation.

Smart Housing Group (or in some cases the landlord or his agent) will automatically arrange for any such testing and certification as and when it becomes necessary, and will endeavour to arrange mutually convenient appointments for such testing directly with the residents of the properties concerned.

Because of the potentially serious (and perhaps even fatal) health and safety implications of such installations not being routinely tested as recommended, all residents of Smart Housing Group properties are required under the terms of their occupancy agreements to grant full and unrestricted access to any qualified personnel who might be contracted to undertake such safety testing on behalf of either Smart Housing Group or any individual property's landlord(s).

Failure to comply with any such reasonable request could result in Smart Housing Group refusing to continue your temporary accommodation provision, and thereafter the placing local authority determining that it owes you no further housing duty. In these circumstances you would then be required to make your own accommodation arrangements.

## **11. COUNCIL TAX AND UTILITY SUPPLIES**

As the authorised occupier (resident/ licensee etc) of self-contained accommodation you are responsible for the payment of Council Tax (and for claiming any Council Tax benefit that you may be eligible for) throughout your 'tenancy'.

In most cases you are also normally responsible for the payment of all utility charges (gas and electricity supplies) during your 'tenancy' and will need to notify the gas and electricity supplier of your 'tenancy' in order that these accounts can be changed in to your name(s).

(However, if you are exempt from utility charges because of the terms of the placement made for you by your nominating local authority, Smart Housing Group's Tenancy Management Officer will inform you of this when you first move in and provide you with any necessary advice and/ or information that you might need).

## 12. INSURANCE

Buildings Insurance is the owner's responsibility (ie. the Landlord). This is normally undertaken on an annual basis and is at no cost to the 'resident(s)'.

However, your personal possessions and any valuables you might have are not covered by the Buildings Insurance.

Home Contents Insurance is your responsibility. If you require Home Contents Insurance you must arrange this yourself, and at your own cost.

**NB** Neither Smart Housing Group nor the Landlord will accept any financial liability for any loss or damage to any personal possessions or valuables in your temporary accommodation, no matter how such loss or damage may have arisen or been caused...

## 13. SECURING AND PROTECTING YOUR HOME AND VALUABLES

Please always try to keep your home and personal possessions safe by:

- Always checking the identity of anyone you let into your home
- Leaving an electric light on when you go out and always locking-up
- Not any leaving naked flames (especially candles) unattended
- Not removing or 'hiding' from plain sight any fire blankets and/ or extinguishers that have been provided for your safety
- Considering taking out suitable contents insurance
- Marking or photographing personal possessions for insurance purposes
- Regularly testing and changing batteries in any smoke/ heat and/ or CO2 detectors (Remember Smoke/ Heat/ CO2 detectors save lives)
- Ensuring all security locks to doors and windows are used when you are going out
- Joining your local Neighbourhood Watch or Residents' Association
- Cancelling any deliveries if you know you are going to be away
- Being vigilant...

## 14. DISPOSAL OF RUBBISH

Please ensure that all your household rubbish and domestic waste is placed in refuse sacks and deposited in the appropriate or designated place for its collection. The local authority in the area where you now live will normally collect your household rubbish and domestic waste on a regular weekly cycle. It is very important that you ensure that your household rubbish and domestic waste is put out ready for the Council's refuse collection service on the evening before the refuse collection service is due (accumulations of household rubbish and domestic waste that are left out for too long will only attract vermin and rodents to your home).

**NB** The Council's regular refuse collection service will not remove large items such as fridges or furniture. You can, however, contact the local council's waste management service to arrange a special collection of any such item(s). A small fee may be payable for this.

## 15. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Smart Housing Group is committed to improving its environmental performance by measurably reducing any negative impact its operations might have on the world at large.

To this end, Smart Housing Group has successfully undergone a formal certification process and is subject to regular independent external audits for its Environmental Management System standard (ISO 14001) by SGS – an organisation accredited for the purpose by the International Standards Organisation.

Some of the benefits of pursuing an Environmental Management System include:

- Cleaner air
- Less carbon emissions
- Less pollution, and
- Less waste

**YOU can help us by...**

- Switching off any unnecessary lights and appliances when they are not in use
- Ensuring that water is not left running in your accommodation
- Efficiently controlling the temperature of your accommodation

**Please be kind to the environment... Show respect for the world we're living in.**

## **16. PETS**

Many Leasehold properties (and especially those located on private housing estates or on new developments) contain covenants in their head-lease terms and conditions which strictly prohibit residents keeping pets.

Pets are therefore generally not permitted in any of our properties.

The only exceptions to this policy are Guide Dogs for the Blind and Hearing Dogs for the Deaf.

**NB** Failure to abide by Smart Housing Group's Policy on Pets could result in the loss of your temporary accommodation.

## **17. GARDEN MAINTENANCE**

If you are fortunate enough to have been provided with accommodation that has the exclusive use of its own private garden, then it is your responsibility to maintain the garden, and to keep it tidy and free from overgrowth.

**NB** In the event that you do not maintain your garden to a reasonable standard, then Smart Housing Group reserves the right to undertake such gardening on your behalf and charge you our reasonable costs for so doing.

## **18. CARS AND PARKING**

Unfortunately, not all our accommodation comes with allocated off-street parking and if you do have a car, parking can therefore sometimes be quite difficult.

Additionally, street parking can also be difficult in many areas, and increasingly many local authorities are introducing Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) which will require residents to apply for (and pay for) a residents parking permit to allow you to park your vehicle on the street.

Where allocated off-street parking is available, a permit is also often required from the estate management company and you will need to contact Smart's Tenancy Management Officer to find out how to arrange this.

**NB** The cost of obtaining any such permit is your personal responsibility. Failure to obtain and display a valid permit could result in your vehicle being clamped or impounded.

Permission to park on private housing estates, new developments, and other designated areas is only given to those vehicles that are kept in a roadworthy condition and display a valid tax disc.

Permission will not be given to keep vehicles “off road” as per the permission in the DVLA Statutory Off-Road Notification (SORN) rules.

**Please do not:**

- Obstruct emergency access areas
- Park on grass verges or pavements
- Park vans, lorries, caravans, or other large vehicles on private housing estate roads, in parking bays, or on the approaches to flats and houses.
- Undertake repairs or maintenance to any vehicle(s) parked on a private housing estate
- Abandon any vehicle on private housing estates/ developments

## **19. PEST CONTROL AND DOMESTIC HYGIENE**

- You must keep your home free from rats, mice and other pests and infestations (eg. cockroaches and ants).
- To help prevent pests entering your home keep all floors and work surfaces clean and free of all food stuff.
- Remove and thoroughly clean-up after any spillages.
- Vacuum all carpets regularly.
- Wash or mop hard floors regularly with a proprietary cleaner and/ or disinfectant.
- Please do not store packs and bags of dry foods such as rice and flour etc on the floor or on lower surfaces.
- Please also be aware that bulk purchase and inappropriate storage of vegetables and other food stuffs can also encourage pest infestations.
- All food stuffs should ideally be stored in air tight containers.

**NB** Having moved in to your temporary accommodation, if it does at some later point in time suffer from any kind of pest problem or infestation, you should, of course, always notify Smart Housing Group and seek advice. However, please be aware that you will normally be responsible for taking or arranging appropriate remedial action and for the full cost of the same.

## **20. TV LICENCING AND SATELLITE TELEVISION SERVICES**

If you intend to use a television at your temporary accommodation you must apply for a TV Licence registered from that address: failure to do so could result in your prosecution and a significant fine being imposed by the Courts.

**NB** You are not permitted to install a satellite dish at your temporary accommodation without having first obtained the written permission of Smart Housing Group: such permission not to be unreasonably denied. However, it should be noted that many private housing estates and new developments have covenants in

their head-lease terms and conditions which strictly prohibit residents from installing satellite dishes. Accordingly, any satellite dishes that are erected without permission may be removed and disposed of without notice, and a charge for the same levied against the 'resident'.

## **21. BANNED SUBSTANCES & DRUGS**

Banned substances and/ or drugs must not brought into (or allowed to be brought into) your home.

Failure to adhere to this requirement could result in the loss of your temporary accommodation.

**NB** Smart Housing Group staff are required to work closely with the local Police authorities and will always co-operate with any legitimate enquiries or investigations in which the local Police may request our assistance.

## **22. FLAMMABLE (COMBUSTIBLE) AND EXPLOSIVE MATERIALS**

You must not keep, store, or use liquid petroleum gas cylinders, paraffin, bottled gas, or store petrol scooters etc in your home.

You must not keep store or use any other potentially flammable or explosive materials or chemicals in your home.

## **23. DAMP AND CONDENSATION**

Condensation can cause dampness and mould growth in your home. This looks unpleasant and can increase the risk of respiratory illness. It can also cause wooden window frames to rot. The information below explains how condensation forms and how you can keep it to a minimum.

### **What is condensation?**

Condensation starts as moisture in the air, usually produced by cooking, washing, or drying clothes indoors on radiators. When it hits cool surfaces such as walls, mirrors, wall tiles and windows it condenses and forms water droplets. The moist air rises when it is warm and often ends up on ceilings and in upstairs rooms and then it forms mould.

### **Why is it a problem?**

Left untreated, condensation can result in mould growth on walls, ceilings, furniture, furnishings, and clothing in cupboards and drawers. It can also affect wall plaster and cause woodwork to rot.

### **What are the different types of Dampness?**

Condensation is caused by moisture in the air inside your home. This section of Smart Housing Group's Welcome Pack explains how you can reduce condensation and prevent mould forming.

However, damp is generally caused by a fault in the structure of the building. There are two basic types of damp:

- Penetrating damp happens when water enters your home through an external defect (for example a crack in a wall or a loose roof tile).
- Rising Damp is when there is a problem with the damp proof course or membrane and water rises from the ground into the wall or floor.

If you think you have a problem with damp in your home, please contact Smart Housing Group on:

**202 8482 5511**

**How to reduce condensation in your home:**

### **Control excess moisture**

- Close kitchen and bathroom doors to prevent steam going into colder rooms.
- When cooking or washing, let the steam escape by opening a window or using an extractor fan if you have one fitted. Leave the window open or the extractor fan on for up to 20 minutes after you have finished cooking or washing.
- Open some windows in other rooms for a while each day and open any trickle vents in your window frames. This allows a change of air.
- Wipe down surfaces when moisture settles to prevent mould forming.
- Do not block air vents and allow air to circulate around furniture and cupboards.
- You must not use bottled gas or paraffin heaters – these produce a lot of moisture and they are also a health and safety risk.

**Note:** Your tenancy agreement or lease states that you are not allowed to use these in your flats.

### **Produce less moisture**

- Dry clothes outdoors whenever possible or use small ventilated rooms.
- Cover fish tanks and remember that house pets and plants produce moisture as well.
- Cover pans when cooking.
- If you have a tumble drier or washing machine, ensure that it is vented in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

### **Keep your home warm**

Insulation and draught proofing will keep your home warmer and will also cut fuel bills. When the whole house is warmer condensation is less likely to form.

- Insulating your loft and walls will help.
- Maintain low background heat when the weather is cold or wet.

### **Some words of warning:**

- Do not block permanent ventilators.
- Do not completely block chimneys. Leave a hole about two bricks in size and fit a louvered grille over the opening.
- Do not draught-proof rooms where there is condensation or mould growth.
- Do not draught-proof a room where there is a gas cooker or a fuel-burning heater, for example a gas fire.
- Do not draught-proof windows in the bathroom or kitchen.
- Do not put furniture against cold external walls.

### **First steps against mould:**

- Treat any mould you may already have in your home then do what you can to reduce condensation. This will restrict new mould growth.
- Do not disturb mould by brushing or vacuum cleaning. This can increase the risk of respiratory problems.
- Wipe off mould growth immediately with water. Do not use washing up liquid.

- To kill and remove mould growth, wipe down affected areas with a fungicidal wash. This is available from a hardware or DIY store or supermarket. You should choose a product which carries a Health & Safety Executive 'approval number'. Always follow the instructions carefully. Do not use bleach.
- Dry-clean clothes affected by mildew and shampoo carpets.
- After treatment, redecorate using a good quality fungicidal paint to help prevent mould recurring. This paint is not effective if overlaid with ordinary paints or wallpaper.

### Useful information

You can get useful information on effective ways to heat and Insulate your home from the Energy Savings Trust on 0845 727 7200 or at [www.est.org.uk](http://www.est.org.uk)

If you are an owner-occupier or private resident and are aged 60 or over, disabled or infirm, or receiving benefits you may be eligible for assistance with carrying out insulation, draught-proofing or heating works.

If dampness has caused window frames in your home to rot you can treat the wood with preservatives. However, it is important to remember that the only lasting remedy for wood rot is to cure the damp that caused it in the first place.

## 24. IMPORTANT NOTICES

### Fire Prevention:

1. Please turn off all lights, gas and electrical appliances when you leave your accommodation.
2. Never cover or restrict the airflow to electrical appliances or stand items like vases or candles on top of items such as televisions or Hi-fi equipment.
3. Never disable or cover any smoke or heat detectors that may be fitted within your accommodation
4. Always utilise (and never disable) any extractor-fans that may have been provided. (The correct use of extractors will help minimise the number of false fire alarms...)

### In the Event of a Fire:

1. Alert every body in the building; get them to leave the building without delay; find a telephone, dial 999 and ask for the Fire Brigade.
2. Do not endanger yourself or others by trying to save any personal possessions.
3. Telephone Smart Housing Group's Housing Management Team on: **020-8482-5511 or 07773-284405**

### Theft and or damages:

1. All furniture, kitchen appliances and any other items provided for your comfort and use at this accommodation are the property of Smart Housing Group.
2. Guests are responsible for the appropriate use and safe keeping of all such items whilst they remain in occupation of Smart Housing Group accommodation.
3. The disappearance, abuse or destruction of any such items will be treated as theft and the Police advised accordingly.
4. Smart Housing Group will prosecute all offenders.

### **Smoking Drugs and Alcohol:**

1. All communal areas are designated non-smoking areas.
2. Alcohol consumption is not permitted in any of the communal areas or immediately outside the premises.
3. Alcohol abuse/ related nuisance will immediately be reported to the Council and could jeopardise your continued occupancy of this accommodation.
4. Drug use or supply is strictly prohibited: any breach will immediately be reported to the relevant authorities. (Smart Housing Group and Council Officers will fully co-operate with any Police investigations relating to the same.)

### **Loitering:**

Loitering, assembly or congregation outside the premises is strictly prohibited.

## **25. COMPLAINTS**

Smart Housing Group has an enviable reputation for customer care and service delivery. We are here to help you and we pride ourselves on our levels of service and commitment. However, as with all organisations things can and sometimes do go wrong. In such circumstances we will endeavour to put things right as quickly as possible, and with the minimum possible inconvenience to you, our client.

In the event that you do have a complaint, then please pursue one or more of the following courses of action as may be appropriate to your particular circumstances:

### **Informal complaints -**

- Inform your Tenancy Management Officer in person when you next meet with them at your regular home visit/ property inspection
- Report your complaint by telephone: **020 8482 5511** (office hours only)

Most such 'informal' complaints can usually be resolved satisfactorily without the need for any laborious or time consuming correspondence.

However, for more serious or formal complaints, or where you are dissatisfied with our initial response to your informal complaint, you should put your complaint in writing and address it for the attention of:

- **The General Manager – Smart Housing Group, 137 Tottenham Lane, Crouch End, London, N8 9BJ**

We aim to fully respond to all formal (ie. written) complaints within 10 working days of receipt. However, in the event that we may be unable to do so, we will write to you and advise you accordingly.

Please note that there is a right of appeal to all decisions made in respect of formal complaints. Appeals must be made in writing – clearly stating the grounds for the appeal – and providing any additional information that may be relevant. Appeals should be addressed for the attention of:

- The Directors – Smart Housing Group, 137 Tottenham Lane, Crouch End, London, N8 9BJ

**Finally**, if you still remain dissatisfied you can of course contact the staff at the council who originally nominated you to us.

## 26. ENDING YOUR 'TENANCY'

You can surrender your accommodation and end your 'tenancy' at any time by giving at least 24 hours' notice to Smart Housing Group. All Keys should be returned to Smart Housing Group in person; where upon you will be issued with an official Smart Housing Group Key Receipt. You should keep your Key Receipt safe as this confirms the date when your 'tenancy' ended and accordingly when you ceased to be liable for further rent payments.

**NB** If you do not obtain a Key Receipt (confirming your leaving date) you may continue to be held liable for rent payments after you have vacated and any resulting rent arrears transferred to your new rent account. It is therefore in your own best interests to return all keys personally to Smart Housing Group's office and to ensure that you are issued with an official Key Receipt which has been duly signed and authorised.

## 27. BELONGINGS LEFT IN THE PROPERTY AT THE END OF YOUR 'TENANCY'

No personal possessions and/ or other belongings (such as furniture or electrical equipment) must be left behind when you vacate your temporary accommodation. It is your personal responsibility to either take all such items with you, or to arrange for their safe storage - either with friends or family, or perhaps through a commercial storage company - before your 'tenancy' ends.

In the event that any personal possessions and/ or other belongings have been left behind after you vacate (or appear to have abandoned) your temporary accommodation Smart Housing Group will normally assume that they are no longer wanted and having taken an inventory and photographs of the same, will arrange for their immediate disposal, sale, or donation to a charity shop (as appropriate) without any further notice or warnings.

However, in exceptional circumstances, and at Smart Housing Group's absolute discretion, we may in some instances secure commercial storage of any such items for a maximum period of one month. (This would normally only be in circumstances where we had perhaps been made aware by the Council that the 'resident' had been forced to abandon the property through no fault of their own.) In such exceptional circumstances any abandoned possessions could be reclaimed by the former 'resident' within one month of the abandonment of their temporary accommodation upon full payment of the commercial storage fees incurred by Smart Housing Group to date, together with a £50 contribution towards Smart's own costs for arranging such storage. Any items not reclaimed within this period would again be disposed of, sold, or donated as detailed previously.

**NB** Neither Smart Housing Group nor the Council will accept any financial liability for anything that may have been left behind after your 'tenancy' ends (or where it appears you have abandoned your temporary accommodation) and you should be aware that if any such items are left behind, you may also continue to be held liable for the payment of rent at your temporary accommodation address with Smart Housing Group until all such items have been removed.

## 28. EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

### Gas Supply:

If you smell **gas**, think you have a gas **leak**, or are worried that fumes containing **carbon monoxide** are escaping from a gas appliance please call: **0800 111 999**

National Grid Gas Emergencies (Formally Transco)

(This is a 24 hour emergency line)

**NB** Gas is usually a safe and easy way to heat your house but it can also be potentially dangerous if a leak occurs or an appliance is faulty.

If you smell gas or think that you may have a gas leak somewhere then you should call the National Grid Gas Emergencies line straight away.

- Open your windows and doors to let air in, make sure all gas appliances are turned off and turn the gas off at the mains if possible.
- Do not turn lights on or off and avoid using other electrical switches and appliances as this could trigger an explosion.
- Do not smoke, light a match or any other naked flame.
- Do not try and investigate the problem or attempt to fix a leak or a faulty appliance.

### **Electricity Supply:**

Your electricity network operator looks after the safety and security of your electricity supply.

What to do in an emergency if you have no electricity?

### **Power cuts**

First, check whether your neighbours have also lost their supply. If your neighbours don't have power, call the emergency line for your area:

| London        | East of England | South East of England |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 0800 028 0247 | 0800 783 8838   | 0800 783 8866         |

## **29. SHG EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY POLICY**

### **1: POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1** Smart Housing Group Limited is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.
- 1.2** Smart Housing Group Limited will promote the values contained in this policy in all aspects of service delivery and with our relationships with other organisations.
- 1.3** We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation (protected characteristics).
- 1.4** The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff treat visitors, clients, customers, suppliers and former staff members.
- 1.5** All staff have a duty to act in accordance with this policy and treat colleagues with dignity at all times, promoting good relations among staff in a co-operative working environment and not to discriminate against or harass other members of staff, regardless of their status. Your attention is drawn to our separate Anti-harassment and bullying policy.
- 1.6** This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

### **2: WHO IS COVERED BY THE POLICY**

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual workers and agency staff (collectively referred to as staff in this policy).

### **3: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY?**

- 3.1** The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility has been delegated to the General Manager.
- 3.2** All managers must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities. Managers will be given appropriate training on equal opportunities awareness and equal opportunities recruitment and selection best practice. The General Manager has overall responsibility for equal opportunities training.
- 3.3** If you have any questions about the content or application of this policy, you should contact the General Manager.

### **4: SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

- 4.1** This policy applies to all aspects of our relationship with staff and to relations between staff members at all levels. This includes job advertisements, recruitment and selection, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conditions of service, pay and benefits, conduct at work, disciplinary and grievance procedures, and termination of employment.
- 4.2** We will take appropriate steps to accommodate the requirements of different religions, cultures, and domestic responsibilities.

## **5: FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION**

- 5.1** Discrimination by or against staff is generally prohibited unless there is a specific legal exemption. Discrimination may be direct or indirect and it may occur intentionally or unintentionally.
- 5.2** Direct discrimination occurs where someone is treated less favourably because of one or more of the protected characteristics set out above. For example, rejecting an applicant on the grounds of their race because they would not “fit in” would be direct discrimination.
- 5.3** Indirect discrimination occurs where someone is disadvantaged by an unjustified provision, criterion or practice that also puts other people with the same protected characteristic at a particular disadvantage. For example, a requirement to work full time puts women at a particular disadvantage because they generally have greater childcare commitments than men. Such a requirement will need to be objectively justified.
- 5.4** Harassment related to any of the protected characteristics is prohibited. Harassment is unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating someone’s dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Harassment is dealt with further in our Anti-harassment and Bullying Policy.
- 5.5** Victimisation is also prohibited. This is less favourable treatment of someone who has complained or given information about discrimination or harassment, or supported someone else’s complaint.

## **6: RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

- 6.1** We aim to ensure that no job applicant suffers discrimination because of any of the protected characteristics above. Our recruitment procedures are reviewed periodically to ensure that individuals are treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. Job selection criteria are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are relevant to the job and are not disproportionate. Shortlisting of applicants should be done by more than one person wherever possible.
- 6.2** Job advertisements should avoid stereotyping or using wording that may discourage groups with a particular protected characteristic from applying.
- 6.3** We take steps to ensure that our vacancies are advertised to a diverse labour market.
- 6.4** Applicants should not be asked about health or disability before a job offer is made. There are limited exceptions which should only be used with Human Resources approval. For example:
- (a)** Questions necessary to establish if an applicant can perform an intrinsic part of the job (subject to any reasonable adjustments).
  - (b)** Questions to establish if an applicant is fit to attend an assessment or any reasonable adjustments that may be needed at interview or assessment.
  - (c)** Positive action to recruit disabled persons.
  - (d)** Equal opportunities monitoring (which will not form part of the decision-making process).
- 6.5** Applicants should not be asked about past or current pregnancy or future intentions related to pregnancy. Applicants should not be asked about matters concerning age, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment without the approval of Human Resources (who should first consider whether such matters are relevant and may lawfully be taken into account).
- 6.6** We are required by law to ensure that all employees are entitled to work in the UK. Assumptions about immigration status should not be made based on appearance or apparent nationality. All prospective employees, regardless of nationality, must be able to produce original documents (such as a passport) before employment starts, to satisfy current immigration legislation. The list of acceptable documents is available from the UK Border Agency.

- 6.7** To ensure that this policy is operating effectively, we monitor applicants' ethnic group, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age as part of the recruitment procedure. Provision of this information is voluntary and it will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision

related to their employment. The information is removed from applications before shortlisting, and kept in an anonymised format solely for the purposes stated in this policy. Analysing this data helps us take appropriate steps to avoid discrimination and improve equality and diversity.

## **7 LANGUAGE**

- 7.1** We are aware of the wide variety of languages spoken by staff and service users. We appreciate that this can cause difficulties in terms of communication. In order to promote effective communication between staff and service users we ask staff, as far as possible, to adopt English as their working language. Staff are, of course, free to communicate in their native languages during authorised breaks and outside of working hours. However, we ask staff to be sensitive to colleagues and service users around them as misunderstandings can arise through lack of understanding. Similarly, staff whose first language is English must be sensitive to the needs of those whose first language is not.

## **8 WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

- 8.1** Smart Housing Group Ltd. recognises the need for staff to achieve a satisfactory balance between home and work, and will promote flexible working practices wherever possible.

## **9 STAFF TRAINING AND PROMOTION AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

- 9.1** Staff training needs will be identified through one to one meetings you're your line manager performance reviews. All staff will be given appropriate access to training to enable them to progress within the organisation and all promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit.
- 9.2** Our conditions of service, benefits and facilities are reviewed to ensure that they are available to all staff who should have access to them and that there are no unlawful obstacles to accessing them.

## **10 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

- 10.1** We will ensure that redundancy criteria and procedures are fair and objective and are not directly or indirectly discriminatory.
- 10.2** We will also ensure that disciplinary procedures and penalties are applied without discrimination, whether they result in disciplinary warnings, dismissal or other disciplinary action.

## **11: DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION**

- 11.1** If you are disabled or become disabled, we encourage you to tell us about your condition so that we can support you as appropriate.
- 11.2** If you experience difficulties at work because of your disability, you may wish to contact your line manager to discuss any reasonable adjustments that would help overcome or minimise the difficulty. Your line manager may wish to consult with you and your medical adviser(s) about possible adjustments. We will consider the matter carefully and try to accommodate your needs within reason. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.

- 11.3** We will monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they place disabled workers, job applicants or service users at a substantial disadvantage compared to other staff. Where reasonable, we will take steps to improve access for disabled staff and service users.

## **12: FIXED-TERM EMPLOYEES AND AGENCY WORKERS**

We monitor our use of fixed-term employees and agency workers, and their conditions of service, to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits, training, promotion and permanent employment opportunities. We will, where relevant, monitor their progress to ensure that they are accessing permanent vacancies.

## **13: PART-TIME WORK**

We monitor the conditions of service of part-time employees and their progression to ensure that they are being offered appropriate access to benefits and training and promotion opportunities. We will ensure requests to alter working hours are dealt with appropriately under our Flexible Working Policy.

## **14: BREACHES OF THIS POLICY-**

- 14.1** If you believe that you may have been discriminated against you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Grievance Procedure. If you believe that you may have been subject to harassment you are encouraged to raise the matter through our Anti-harassment Policy. If you are uncertain which applies or need advice on how to proceed you should speak to your line manager.
- 14.2** Allegations regarding potential breaches of this policy will be treated in confidence and investigated in accordance with the relevant procedure. Staff who make such allegations in good faith will not be victimised or treated less favourably as a result. False allegations which are found to have been made in bad faith will, however, be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.
- 14.3** Any member of staff who is found to have committed an act of discrimination or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. We take a strict approach to serious breaches of this policy.

## **15: MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

- 15.1** We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.
- 15.2** Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the general Manager.

# **30. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT**

## **SUMMARY**

This document sets out Smart Housing Group's policy for the management of health and safety in the workplace and at work sites, and defines the organization, arrangements and responsibilities for the health and safety of its staff and anyone else working in or visiting a Smart Housing Group property.

## **1. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- 1.2** Smart Housing Group recognizes and accepts its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace and work environment for its employees and others who may be affected by its work, and to ensure adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from its work activities.

**1.3** Smart Housing Group undertakes to comply with all statutory health and safety requirements, and with the terms of the Health and Safety Commission's Approved Code of Practice and guidance, Workplace health, safety and welfare.

**1.4** The company is committed to adopting all reasonably practicable means to eliminate hazards and reduce the risk of injury to its employees and the public.

## **2. ORGANIZATION AND ARRANGEMENTS**

**2.1** Smart Housing Group's organization for health and safety is undertaken by the competent persons identified in section 6 of this document.

**2.2** The company's health and safety arrangements include:

- providing equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- defining arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of materials and equipment;
- ensuring a healthy working environment and a safe place of work with safe access to it and safe egress from it;
- applying ergonomics, so as to reduce the potential for injury and ill health at work, and improve performance and productivity;
- communicating health and safety awareness to all its employees, through staff meetings, leaflets and posters on health and safety law and practices;
- undertaking risk assessments to identify hazards, evaluate the possible risks for employees and others, define measures to eliminate or minimise risks, and implement corrective action;
- taking into account any particular difficulties likely to be faced by employees or visitors with disabilities;
- providing first-aider(s);
- recording accidents and incidents of work-related ill health in an accident book (records of accidents, dangerous occurrences and ill-health enquiries);
- investigating workplace accidents and working days lost through accidents;
- implementing a no-smoking policy;
- offering adequate welfare facilities and arrangements;
- providing sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that all employees understand their responsibility to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and for the health and safety of people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work, and that they are aware of the hazards at their workplace together with the necessary measures to be taken to protect against these hazards;

- consulting with its employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- securing the active engagement of employees in improving health and safety;
- applying a monitoring, inspection and auditing procedure to ensure the maintenance of safe workplace conditions and effective management of health and safety throughout its premises; and
- reviewing and revising this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

### **2.3 ALL EMPLOYEES ARE REQUIRED TO:**

- cooperate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters;
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- report any health and safety concerns to the Managing Director.

## **31. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

### **SUMMARY**

This document sets out Smart Housing Group's policy for the management of health and safety in the workplace and at work sites, and defines the organization, arrangements and responsibilities for the health and safety of its staff and anyone else working in or visiting a Smart Housing Group property.

### **1. STATEMENT OF POLICY**

- 1.2** Smart Housing Group recognizes and accepts its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace and work environment for its employees and others who may be affected by its work, and to ensure adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from its work activities.
- 1.3** Smart Housing Group undertakes to comply with all statutory health and safety requirements, and with the terms of the Health and Safety Commission's Approved Code of Practice and guidance, Workplace health, safety and welfare.
- 1.4** The company is committed to adopting all reasonably practicable means to eliminate hazards and reduce the risk of injury to its employees and the public.

### **2. ORGANIZATION AND ARRANGEMENTS**

- 2.1** Smart Housing Group's organization for health and safety is undertaken by the competent persons identified in section 6 of this document.
- 2.2** The company's health and safety arrangements include:
- providing equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
  - defining arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of materials and equipment;
  - ensuring a healthy working environment and a safe place of work with safe access to it and safe egress from it;
  - applying ergonomics, so as to reduce the potential for injury and ill health at work, and improve performance and productivity;
  - communicating health and safety awareness to all its employees, through staff meetings, leaflets and posters on health and safety law and practices;
  - undertaking risk assessments to identify hazards, evaluate the possible risks for employees and others, define measures to eliminate or minimise risks, and implement corrective action;
  - taking into account any particular difficulties likely to be faced by employees or visitors with disabilities; • providing first-aider(s);
  - recording accidents and incidents of work-related ill health in an accident book (records of accidents, dangerous occurrences and ill-health enquiries);
  - investigating workplace accidents and working days lost through accidents;
  - implementing a no-smoking policy;
  - offering adequate welfare facilities and arrangements;
  - providing sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that all employees understand their responsibility to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and for the health and safety of people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work, and that they are aware of the hazards at their workplace together with the necessary measures to be taken to protect against these hazards;

- consulting with its employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- securing the active engagement of employees in improving health and safety;
- applying a monitoring, inspection and auditing procedure to ensure the maintenance of safe workplace conditions and effective management of health and safety throughout its premises; and
- reviewing and revising this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

**2.3** All employees are required to:

- cooperate with supervisors and managers on health and safety matters;
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- report any health and safety concerns to the Managing Director.

## **Consultation**

**2.4** All employees have the right to be consulted about health and safety issues that affect them, and to be aware of relevant legal requirements and industry standards.

## **3 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

**3.1** All employees are given health and safety induction training when they start work, covering basics such as first aid and fire safety, as well as refresher training throughout their employment with the company.

**3.2** Topics covered in induction and refresher training include:

- Introduction to health and safety
- Basic and specialist fire safety
- Basic and specialist first aid and lifesaving skills
- EU and UK based regulations
- Office safety, including signing, hazard avoidance and evacuation in the event of an emergency - Legislation
  - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
  - Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations
  - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations
  - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
  - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
  - Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
  - Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Regulations
  - Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002 • Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations
  - Work at Height Regulations 2005.

**3.3** The company provides fire risk assessments and training in conformity with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

## **4 WORK STATIONS**

**4.1** Smart Housing Group complies with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. It is the company's policy to:

- analyse workstations, and assess and reduce risks;
- ensure workstations meet minimum requirements in terms of adjustment of screens, desks and chairs;
- ensure adequate breaks away from the screen and keyboard and changes of activity;
- on request arrange eye tests and pay for spectacles if special ones are needed;
- offer footrests and other means of support to those who need them;
- provide health and safety training and information related to VDUs and workstations.

## **5 WORK AT EXTERNAL SITES**

**5.1** Work at external sites for which the company is responsible and to which the Construction Design and Management Regulations and/or Work at Height Regulations are applicable is undertaken in compliance with the terms of the said regulations and in accordance with an appropriate health and safety plan and site based risk assessments.

## **6. SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

**6.1** The Managing Director of Smart Housing Group is responsible for the application and maintenance of this policy and the company's health and safety arrangements, including:

- undertaking risk assessments, including fire safety and fire-risk assessments, and implementing actions required to remove or control risks so far as is reasonably practicable;
- safety monitoring, including visual inspection, checking accident/incident records, planned maintenance of safety equipment;
- maintaining records of risk assessments, safety measures and precautions;
- accident investigation;
- advice and training to staff on health and safety issues;
- emergency procedures, including fire risk assessment, checking escape and evacuation routes, maintaining fire extinguishers and testing alarms.

**6.2** Health and Safety Officers are responsible for:

- Ensuring Smart Housing Group is aware of its responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation at all its offices.
- Advising management and staff on all aspects of health and safety and ensure management and staff are aware of their legal obligations and responsibilities for health and safety.
- Co-ordinating, producing, reviewing and updating the Health and Safety Policy.
- Maintaining records of all accidents and incidents on any of Smart Housing Group's premises or suffered by any staff whilst out on Company business and report any regular problems to the Senior Management Team.
- Reporting any serious accidents on Smart Housing Group's premises or to any staff whilst out on Company business to the local environmental health department in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.
- Ensuring Smart Housing Group has a sufficient number of first aiders at the Operations Centre and Appointed Persons in the off-site premises.

- Maintaining, updating and communicating the fire procedures at the Operations Centre and monitor that procedures are in place and up to date at all other offices.
- Ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable that all visitors are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
- Maintaining a central file of hazard data sheets and ensure Risk Assessment/How to Handle Sheets are completed for all hazardous substances, to comply with the COSHH regulations.
- Maintaining communication on all COSHH related matters to all staff.
- Providing health and safety training.

**6.3** Off Site Managers, normally the Area Manager, are responsible for the implementation of this Policy throughout their office and must:

- Ensure the office is, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment and report promptly all details, hazards or potential dangers to the Facilities Director.
- Ensure all staff are trained to carry out their duties safely and are aware of any potential hazards in the workplace.
- Ensure all working methods, practices and procedures within the office are designed to provide maximum safety and minimum risk to staff.
- Ensure adequate supervision and training is provided at all times, especially where potentially dangerous machines, materials and substances are present.
- Ensure staff observe all safety rules and, where necessary, wear protective clothing and use safety guards and protective equipment.
- Communicate office fire instructions to all staff, security and cleaning staff and all other contractors and ensure they are all aware of the procedures. Ensure all fire exits are kept clear of obstruction.
- Ensure all staff know who the "Appointed Person" is for first aid in the office and the location of the first aid box and ensure the first aid box is kept fully stocked.
- Report any accident, injury or other potentially harmful incident in their office to the health and safety officer at Operations Centre as soon as possible.
- Ensure any hazardous substances in the office are properly labelled and stored in a safe manner. Ensure no new substances are brought into the office without obtaining the hazard data sheet from the supplier and notifying the health and safety officer. This includes hazardous substances needed by staff or contractors to carry out maintenance work.
- Ensure the General Manager is notified of any new electrical equipment brought onto the premises. No private electrical equipment should be used on the premises, without the permission of the General Manager.
- Ensure, whenever possible, all maintenance work is carried out in a safe manner and no risks to health and/or safety are created.

**6.4** The General Manager has responsibility for ensuring that Smart Housing Group premises meet with current safety standards and are regularly and properly maintained. His responsibilities are to:

- Maintain all fire fighting equipment and materials on a regular basis and ensure they are, so far as is reasonably practicable, in good working order.
- Ensure all fire exits are clearly marked and kept free from obstructions.
- Ensure all fire procedures are provided for all premises and statutory notices for display.
- Ensure all electrical equipment is tested regularly in compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
- Ensure all Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's) that is used for the housing of Service Users shall have clear, unambiguous signage to mark exit routes in the event of fire and emergency lighting is

installed and regularly tested in accordance with BS5266-1:2005.

- Ensure that all House of Multiple Occupation (HMO's) used for the housing of service users is fitted with a mains operated, inter-linked smoke alarm system complying with BS5839-1:2002. The system of alarms should have a built in sounder and trickle charged batteries which will operate if the mains supply fails. They should be installed in all bedrooms, living rooms, on the escape route and a heat detector be fitted in any kitchen areas.
- Ensure where fitted that all fire extinguishers in property used for the housing of Service Users complies with BS EN3 and the property is fitted with an emergency lighting system on the escape route which complies with BS5266-1:2005.
- Ensure all HMO's that are used for the housing of service users is provided with a fire blanket which complies with BS 7944:1999 and BS EN 1869:1997 and is fitted in the kitchen or other area where the cooking of food occurs.

#### **6.5 All employees must :-**

- Familiarise themselves with Smart Housing Group's Health and Safety Policy and comply with its requirements.
- Take all reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and observe the safety standards laid down in this Policy.
- Immediately report any accident, injury or potentially harmful incident occurring at work to their supervisor and/or Health and Safety Officer.
- Ensure that they use any equipment provided in accordance with the training that they have received, inform their Manager/team leader and Site Safety Officer about any imminent risk or danger, and also report any shortcomings that they see in the protection arrangements.
- Raise any issues immediately with their Manager/team leader and Site Safety Officer, faced with a conflict between the demands of safety and his or her job; also to inform their manager of any personal health & safety requirements they may have (training, specific protective equipment or precautions).
- Report any potential hazards or risks immediately to their Manager/team leader and Site Safety Officer, no matter how small they may seem at the time;
- Ensure that they attend the induction course as soon as possible after starting work in order to become familiar with basic health & safety regulations and thus be able to adequately self-assess their working conditions.
- Know who the first aiders are in the Operations Centre (or in the case of off-site offices, the Appointed Person). Also, know the location of the nearest First Aid box and the procedures to be followed in an emergency.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Fire & Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

### **Accident and Illness Procedures**

### **COSHH Regulations**

### **Electricity at Work Regulations 1989**

### **New and Expectant Mothers at Work**

### **Working with VDUs**

## **FIRE & EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

### **General points**

- All sites must have an evacuation procedure for use in fire or other emergencies and each site safety officer is responsible for drawing up this procedure and ensuring it includes the names of persons nominated to carry out specific roles. A copy of the site procedure must be sent to the Smart Housing Group Facilities Director.
- Where premises are shared with other residents, procedures must be jointly agreed with the managing agents or other residents.
- The procedure must take into consideration the conditions relevant to that site eg whether the alarm alerts the fire brigade or the person discovering the fire needs to ring the fire brigade; the assembly point, and any special arrangements for the evacuation of disabled people on the premises.
- Managers must ensure all staff are familiar with this procedure and local procedures.
- All sites must have named members of staff responsible for fire duties when the alarm is sounded (fire wardens). There should be a fire warden for every 10 people on the floor (including usual numbers of Service Users present) and there should be sufficient staff trained to cover the role in case of absence. The site may need more fire wardens if it has special requirements, e.g. incapacitated residents, hidden areas etc.
- All staff have a responsibility to ensure fire doors are kept shut and fire extinguishers in their place. It is not permitted to remove or move fire extinguishers without the permission of the site safety officer, nor to keep fire doors stopped open.
- Evacuation drills must be held on all sites at least quarterly.
- Fire alarms should be tested weekly, and a named person on site is allocated the responsibility for carrying these out (from different call points each week) and for recording tests in the fire log. Incidents requiring emergency evacuation must be reported

### **Evacuation Procedure**

Site evacuation procedures should be based on the following steps:

#### **Fire**

1. On discovering a fire, sound the alarm.
2. Call the fire brigade.
3. Do not attempt to tackle the fire yourself unless it is obviously small and you know which extinguisher to use and how to use it.
4. On hearing the alarm, leave the building by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lift.
5. Receptionists: take out the Visitors Book and staff signing in sheets/book on your way out of the building.
6. Fire wardens: check that everyone in your area has left, and close doors behind you as you leave. Report to the site safety officer or senior manager at Assembly Point.
7. Go to the nominated assembly point and make sure you are checked off as present and safe.
8. Do not re-enter the building until the fire brigade or the most senior manager present says it is safe to do so.
9. Senior manager/site safety officer present: take reports from fire wardens and register takers so that you can confirm to the Fire Brigade that everyone is present and accounted for.

10. Senior managers/site safety officer – record evacuation in fire logbook.

### **Other Emergency** (*i.e. flooding, structural damage or other imminent danger*) **Senior**

#### **manager/site safety officer present:**

1. Take the decision to evacuate the building and sound the fire alarm.
2. Do not allow anyone to re-enter the building until you are sure it is safe for them to do so.

#### **All staff and persons on the premises:**

1. On hearing the alarm, everyone must leave the building and follow the procedure for fire evacuation.
2. Do not re-enter the building until the fire brigade, police or the most senior manager present says it is safe to do so.

### **Suspect Packages and Bombs**

Smart Housing Group will provide suitable procedures for dealing with emergencies including bomb threats. It is stressed the likelihood of such an event happening is extremely remote. All staff must be aware of the following. The majority of threats are telephoned to the target. Occasionally these calls are through a third party. Sometimes, a threat is communicated through letters or by a recording.

There are **two** logical explanations for calling, or making, a **bomb threat**:

1. **The caller wants to create panic or anxiety among people - this will result in disruption to normal activities at the location where the device is placed.**
2. **The caller has knowledge, or believes that an explosive or bomb has been, or will be placed. He or she wants to minimise personal injury, or damage the property. (The caller may be the person who placed the device, or is aware of such information.)**

The following **ACTION** should be followed if:

#### **A BOMB THREAT IS RECEIVED OVER THE TELEPHONE**

**Stay calm: Try to get the following information from the caller:**

- Where is the bomb?
- What time is the bomb set to explode?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What kind of wrapping is the bomb in?
- Why was the bomb sent/placed to us?
- Who the bomber or caller is?

The **SENIOR MANAGER** present at the time will:

1. Decide whether to evacuate building (follow guidelines on Evacuation above) using the fire alarm or otherwise.
2. Call the Emergency services.
3. Investigate & report action taken.

## ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS PROCEDURE

### General points

- All sites must have named members of staff responsible for first aid duties and these staff must attend a certified training course. There should be at least one first aider for every 20 people on the floor, and there should be sufficient staff trained to cover the role in case of absence.
- All sites must have sufficient first aid boxes and a named person responsible for checking and replacing the contents.
- The location of first aid boxes must be identified by statutory signs.
- Notices indicating who the first aiders are and where they work must be put up in all sites.
- Managers must keep sickness absence records of staff absent because of an accident or incident at work or because of a notifiable disease contracted at work.
- If a serious accident occurs (i.e. an accident resulting in an injury such as a broken limb, concussion, hospital admission or absence from work for three days or more), the Health and Safety Officer or General Manager or Maintenance Manager must be notified immediately. Any such accidents must, under the Report of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), be reported to the HSE.
- **Immediate notification** (by telephone or by direct access using the HSE website by the General Manager, or in his absence an authorised person), is needed if a death or serious injury (including any injury which results in the person being admitted to hospital for more than 24 hours), has happened in connection with Smart Housing Group business or if there has been 'a dangerous occurrence' as defined in the regulation.
- The Health and Safety Officer or the General Manager must send a written report within ten days if :-
  - a. anyone is off work for more than three days as a result of an accident at work
  - b. If the Local Authority has had to be notified of any death, serious injury or dangerous occurrence
  - c. If a specified work-related disease has been certified by a doctor.
- All accidents, incidents and other potentially harmful incidents occurring at work or to any member of staff whilst carrying out Company business must be reported in the Accident Book held on site. This includes incidents involving visitors and contractors.
- Any car accident involving a Company car should be reported immediately to the General Manager or the Maintenance Manager.

### Accident Prevention

- The majority of accidents can be avoided through proper planning of office space, the siting and safe use of furniture and equipment and the design of safe systems of work. Both the manager and each individual must take responsibility for promoting the awareness of health and safety in their area. All potential hazards and incidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Officer immediately so that action can be taken to minimise the risk involved.

### Accident procedure

- Send for the nearest first aider.
- If first aid is not sufficient to deal with the situation, ask the receptionist to call for an ambulance.
- If the person is taken to hospital, arrange for a member of staff to accompany them.
- Take any practical measures to prevent further accidents in the same place, e.g. notices, person to alert others etc.
- Report any accident, incident or near miss immediately to a manager

- Record what happened
- Investigate the cause of the accident and take measures taken to prevent reoccurrence (**manager or site safety officer**).
- In the case of serious accidents and those coming under RIDDOR, inform the Health and Safety Officer or General Manager.
- Monitor absence as a result of the accident or incident.

## **COSHH – CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH REGULATIONS**

The COSHH Regulations cover all substances which have a potential for causing harm to the health of employees.

NO SUBSTANCE WHICH COULD BE REGARDED (HOWEVER REMOTELY) AS HAZARDOUS SHOULD BE BROUGHT ONTO THE PREMISES OR USED UNLESS A HAZARD DATA SHEET HAS BEEN OBTAINED AND THE RISK ASSESSED.

**All employees** should be aware of any substances which are classed as hazardous and used or stored in their area of work. Any employee intending to use a hazardous substance must first read the COSHH Risk Assessment sheet and be aware of the hazard.

The risk assessment sheet may state if protective or other special clothing or equipment is needed when handling or using the substance. Any such special instructions must be followed.

**First Aiders** and Appointed Persons should ensure they are given a full list of any hazardous substances, make themselves aware of any potential dangers and of the first aid treatment in the event of a spillage/ inhalation.

### **Managers must:-**

- Inform the Health and Safety Officer of any hazardous substances brought onto the premises.
- Ensure they know what hazardous substances are being used by their staff.
- Ensure Manufacturers Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are obtained for all dangerous substances and copies sent to the Health and Safety Officer.
- Ensure all COSHH Risk Assessments are completed and posted near to where the substances are being used and copies sent to the Health and Safety Officers.
- Provide training to ensure their staff are made aware of any potential risks to health from the substances and know how to use them safely. This includes the use of personal protective equipment e.g. safety goggles or gloves.
- Ensure staff use any necessary personal protective equipment.
- Keep records of all hazardous substances together with MSDS and COSHH Risk Assessments for the first aiders in their teams.

### **Monitoring**

The Health and Safety Officers at Operations Centre will monitor COSHH management procedures in the Operations Centre and ensure procedures are in place in all other premises of Smart Housing Group. They will conduct an annual review of substances on Smart Housing Group Premises.

IF IN DOUBT ABOUT A PARTICULAR SUBSTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT THE SUPPLIER TO OBTAIN FURTHER DETAILS.

## **COSHH Management Procedures – Contractors**

It is imperative that Smart Housing Group is aware of all substances being brought onto the premises by Contractors and how they are used.

In employing a Contractor, the responsibility for carrying out an assessment of each substance is transferred. However Smart Housing Group must ensure that the assessment has been carried out and that the Contractor has fulfilled all his legal obligations.

**The Contractor's legal duties are to:-**

- Carry out an assessment of the substances to be used and use a safer alternative substance is available.
- Obtain a MSDS for each substance. A copy should be given to their Smart Housing Group contact and to all users outlining how work using the substance will be carried out, giving details of any hazards and stating any precautions that must be taken and the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident, including the first aid treatment.
- All chemicals should be removed from Smart Housing Group premises when not in use. If chemicals brought onto site by Contractors are stored on Smart Housing Group premises the General Manager, or if off-site premises, the most senior on site must be informed. The Contractor must ensure that all chemicals are stored in a safe manner. Chemicals should not be disposed of at the Operations Centre or off-site without the permission of the most senior person responsible for the site/s.

## **ELECTRICITY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1989**

All electrical appliances and equipment in premises owned or leased by Smart Housing Group will be tested on a regular basis.

This work will be carried out by a qualified electrical contractor under the supervision of the General Manager, Operations Centre and for off-site premises by the appropriate Area Manager.

Any new appliances purchased should be British Kite Mark tested and fitted with a safety plug. If there is any doubt whatsoever regarding the use or safety of any electrical equipment, consult the General Manager, Operations Centre or for the off-site premises the Area Manager.

## **NEW AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS AT WORK**

Employers are now legally required to take particular account of any risk to new and expectant mothers that may affect their health and safety or that of their child. We are required to take action to ensure that they are not exposed to any significant risk and if necessary to:-

- (i) change working conditions or hours
- (ii) offer suitable alternative work, or if that is not possible
- (iii) give the member of staff paid leave

The type of risks which may affect Smart Housing Group staff include:-

- a) Manual Handling – hormonal changes can affect ligaments and increase risk of injury. Co-ordination may also be reduced.
- b) Movement and posture – fatigue, difficulty in standing for long periods, restricted movement and postural problems associated with increased size.
- c) Traveling – fatigue, reduced co-ordination, etc.
- d) Mental and physical burdens leading to stress, anxiety and increased blood pressure.
- e) Contagious diseases such as German Measles and Chicken Pox.

- f) Hazardous substances – handling of any hazardous substances should be avoided. (See earlier section on COSHH).
- g) According to current scientific research, there are no particular risks to expectant mothers from working with Display Screen Equipment.

Managers will be expected to have particular concern for the health and safety of any new or expectant mothers and to advise the General Manager if there are any problems.

## **WORKING WITH VDU's**

### **Guidelines for Use**

When working for any length of time at a terminal/VDU screen, adopt a position that is comfortable for you. User of Display Screen Equipment will be asked to conduct regular self assessments of their work station.

### **Chair**

- Adjust your chair to a height which allows you to relax your shoulders and arms and keep your forearms horizontal and your wrists straight when using the keyboard or mouse.
- Sit right back in your chair as upright as possible and ensure the lumbar support on the chair is supporting your lower back.
- Ensure your feet rest flat on the floor. If they do not, you may need a footrest.
- Remove obstacles from under the desk which prevent an upright posture – you should be able to freely move your legs.

### **Keyboard and screen**

- Adjust your keyboard and screen to ensure a good keying and viewing position.
- Ensure there is space in front of the keyboard to rest your hands and wrists when you are not keying in.
- Do not bend your hands up or down at the wrists when keying.
- Angle your screen to avoid reflection/glare
- Where possible, avoid having to directly face a window or other source of bright light.
- Use any available window blinds to reduce glare.
- Ensure the characters on the VDU screen are sharply focused and can be read easily.
- Tell your line manager about any screens with flickering characters and keep your screen clean.

### **Workstation**

Arrange your documents so you do not have repeatedly stretch to turn over pages, or lean across to see the print on documents.

### **Change of Activity**

The Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 suggest a 10 minute change of work activity for every hour of continuous VDU use. This would include:-

- Alternating screen with non-screen work
- Avoiding any keyboard work or rapid hand and wrist movements during the change of activity.

## Lap Top Computers

Only use the laptop when it is appropriate to do so and never use the laptop when it is possible to use a desktop system.

The problems associated with working with laptops can be divided into two main areas. The first is the design of the equipment itself. Laptops were obviously designed for portability and this means that most of them have screens fixed to the machine, keyboards that are smaller and screens that may not be as clear. These features can make it more difficult to adopt comfortable and healthy working postures.

The second problem area is the range of environments in which laptops are used. Unlike in a modern office, when working at home, on a train, plane, in a hotel or a meeting room, it can be difficult to find a comfortable working position. When using a laptop for any length of time you should ensure that you are comfortable and change activity from screen to non-screen work after every hour of continuous use.

## Eye Tests

To comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, the Company will cover the cost of an eye test to “regular users” of VDU’s who request such a test. For the small number of staff who have a viewing problem at the VDU viewing distance only, Smart Housing Group will contribute 50% towards the cost of corrective spectacles for use solely with VDU’s.

A “regular user” for the purposes of the regulation is:-

- Anyone who uses a display screen or microfiche reader for at least 50% of their working time (measured over an average working month).

OR

- Anyone who uses a display screen or microfiche reader for continuous spells of more than 1 hour on a more or less daily basis.

OR

- Anyone aged 40 or over who uses a display screen or microfiche reader.

## Authorised Signatories:

Name: Christos Papaloizou (Director)

## Authorised Signatories:

Name: Lakis Michaelides (Director)

Dated: 2nd February 2012

## 32 SUMMARY OF OUR RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

### Your Main Responsibilities...

- To occupy this accommodation as your principal home
- Not to alter, adapt, modify, improve or redecorate your accommodation without first having obtained written authorisation from Smart Housing Group
- Not to damage or misuse your accommodation, or allow it to be damaged or misused by others.
- To be responsible for the cost and/ or repair of any damages which do occur at the property whilst you are the legal resident/ licensee

- To be a good neighbour and not to cause or permit nuisance to others
- To at all times permit unrestricted access to your accommodation by Smart Housing Group staff, their sub-contractors or agents, in the reasonable pursuance of their duties
- Not to threaten, intimidate, harass, physically or verbally abuse Smart Housing Group Staff, their subcontractors or agents, or any other person

#### **Our Main Responsibilities...**

- To provide you with a safe and secure temporary home in which to live
- To undertake regular safety certification
- To regularly visit you at home and monitor your use of the accommodation which you have been allocated
- To undertake or arrange for repairs and maintenance which may reasonably be required at your accommodation
- To provide your nominating Council with regular monitoring and home visit reports

**...Show respect for the world in which we're living; respect yourself, your neighbours, and everyone else.**

