

**CABINET**  
**8 JULY 2025**

---

**HOUSING SERVICES FIRE SAFETY POLICY FOR PURPOSE-BUILT BLOCKS OF FLATS,  
SHELTERED AND EXTRA CARE ACCOMMODATION 2025-2030**

---

**Responsible Cabinet Member -  
Councillor Matthew Roche, Health and Housing Portfolio**

**Responsible Director –  
Elizabeth Davison, Executive Director – Resources and Governance**

---

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. For Cabinet to approve the Housing Services Fire Safety Policy for Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats, Sheltered and Extra Care Accommodation 2025-2030.

**Summary**

2. Members will recall that Cabinet approved the existing Housing Services Fire Safety Policy 2022-2027 on 6 December 2022. This policy covered the fire safety arrangements for Council owned sheltered and extra care accommodation.
3. Since then, work has been ongoing in developing a fire safety policy for Council owned purpose-built blocks of flats. Rather than present a separate policy for Members to consider, a single policy covering all Council owned accommodation with communal areas has been developed, updated with the latest legislation and best practice guidance.
4. The Housing Services Fire Safety Policy for Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats, Sheltered and Extra Care Accommodation 2025-2030 at **Appendix 1** sets out how we will provide staff, residents, visitors and partner organisations in these types of accommodation with clear guidelines as to how to prevent fires and what action to take in the event of a fire, to protect themselves and others.
5. The Tenants Panel has been consulted on the draft policy, and they have given their full support. This report was considered by the Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2025, who agreed its onward submission for consideration by Cabinet.

## Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (a) Consider the contents of this report, and
  - (b) Approve the Housing Services Fire Safety Policy for Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats, Sheltered and Extra Care Accommodation 2025-2030 at Appendix 1.

## Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
- (a) Darlington Borough Council has a duty to comply with fire safety legislation.
  - (b) The Social Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards places a duty on social housing landlords to provide their tenants with quality, safe accommodation.
  - (c) The adoption of a formal Fire Safety Policy is one of the ways to demonstrate how we will achieve both compliance with the legislation and the Social Housing Regulator's Consumer Standards.

**Elizabeth Davison**  
**Executive Director – Resources and Governance**

## Background Papers

- (i) The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- (ii) The Fire Safety Act 2021.

Anthony Sandys: Extension 6926

Council Plan	This report supports the Council Plan's HOMES priority to provide affordable and secure homes that meet the current and future needs of residents
Addressing inequalities	An equality impact assessment screening form has been completed in relation to this policy, but no adverse impacts have been identified on people with any protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010
Tackling Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address
Efficient and effective use of resources	There are no issues which this report needs to address
Health and Wellbeing	This policy sets out our commitment to protecting staff, tenants, visitors, partner organisations and contractors from the effects of fire within all our properties.
S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no issues which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	All wards with Council owned purpose-built blocks of flats, sheltered and extra care accommodation
Groups Affected	All Council tenants in those types of accommodation

Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	This report does not represent an urgent decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	There are no issues which this report needs to address

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

8. The Housing Services Fire Safety Policy for Purpose-Built Blocks of Flats, Sheltered and Extra Care Accommodation 2025-2030 at Appendix 1 sets out how we will provide staff, residents, visitors and partner organisations in these types of accommodation with clear guidelines as to how to prevent fires and what action to take in the event of a fire, to protect themselves and others.
9. The policy covers the following areas:
  - (a) **Relevant legislation:** This section sets out the relevant fire safety legislation that Darlington Borough Council must comply with as part of our statutory duties to provide our tenants with safe homes.
  - (b) **Scope:** This section sets out the aims and the purpose of the policy and links to our corporate fire safety arrangements.
  - (c) **Responsibilities:** This section sets out the responsibilities of Darlington Borough Council in relation to fire safety, together with the responsibilities of tenants and visitors.
  - (d) **Arrangements:** This section sets out the specific arrangements in relation to this policy, including fire risk assessments, evacuation procedures and our stay put policy, record keeping, training and instructions.
  - (e) **Fire Safety Information for purpose-built flats, sheltered and extra care accommodation:** This section sets out the specific fire safety information for each different type of accommodation such as, the fire detection and alarm systems, firefighting equipment, fire doors, fire protection, signage, sprinklers and smoke control systems.

### Outcome of Consultation

10. The Tenants Panel has been consulted on the draft policy, and they have given their full support.

### **Equalities considerations**

11. An equality impact assessment screening form has been completed in relation to this policy, but no adverse impacts have been identified on people with any protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.