

Title:	Major Incident Policy
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our residents and others could be affected by a major incident in or near one of our properties and this policy describes our approach to ensuring the safety of residents and others ensuring that homes and services are restored to working order as quickly as possible.
- 1.2 A major incident is considered to be an incident in or near to the home which affects the residents' ability to access or live safely in their home and may include but is not restricted to
- Fire, flood, leakage of toxic material
 - Failure of essential services
 - Failure of major building components
 - Terrorism related event
 - Health and safety related incident
- 1.3 We will apply our professional judgement as well as take advice from statutory agencies and other third parties on whether a major event near a home has rendered that home inaccessible or unsafe to live in.

- 1.4 A major incident may occur that does not render homes uninhabitable but nevertheless requires some of the actions outlined in this policy and the associated procedures.
- 1.4 If a major incident occurs we will work with the emergency and security services, statutory and voluntary agencies and the local authority if involved, to ensure that residents are safe, kept informed and assisted throughout. We will work to ensure a speedy resumption of safe access to homes and/or services at the earliest possible opportunity.

2. Finding out about the incident

- 2.1 Residents, staff in the area or members of the public including emergency services can alert us using the office telephone number. For out of hours incidents, residents can use the number of an emergency contractor that we have made available (residents in sheltered housing can alert the Community Alarm Service). Both the emergency contractor and the Community Alarm Service hold contact numbers for and are able to contact members of the Extended Management Team out of hours should an incident potentially deemed to be a major incident occur

3. Immediate response

- 3.1 The manager receiving the initial report will immediately notify the CEO and relevant Directors who will decide whether to categorise the event as a major incident. The Chair of the Board must be informed at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.2 The CEO (or lead SMT member if CEO is on leave) will lead the response by taking on the role of Controller. Any actions requested by the Controller need to be completed quickly.
- 3.3 Where the Controller is not the CEO, the CEO should be kept informed where reasonably possible.
- 3.4 The Controller will appoint a Central Co-ordinator to co-ordinate the response to the Major Incident. The Central Co-ordinator should then assign co-ordinators within teams where needed to assist. Assignments should be recorded in the Major Incident Report produced to SMT following the incident.

Controller	CEO Any member of SMT in CEO absence
Central Co-ordinator	Any member of MMT As decided by the Controller
Operations Co-ordinator	Any member of Housing As decided by the Central Co-ordinator
Finance Co-ordinator	Any member of Finance As decided by the Central Co-ordinator

Property Co-ordinator	Any member of Property As decided by the Central Co-ordinator
Corporate Services/HR Co-ordinator	Any member of Corporate Services As decided by the Central Co-ordinator
Communications Co-ordinator	Communications Officer Or another member of Corporate Services as required as decided by the Central Co-ordinator

3.5 As soon as co-ordinators are assigned, the Communications Co-ordinator should set up a single use WhatsApp group for the purposes of the communication throughout the major incident. This should include all assigned co-ordinators and any members of the Extended Management Team not already involved. If the Communications Co-ordinator is unable to do this, this should be delegated to the Corporate Governance Officer.

4. Actions Required

4.1 For all staff, actions related to the major incident should take priority over other day to day operational activities.

4.2 As actions and responses progress throughout the major incident, updates to the major incident WhatsApp group should occur regularly. A conference call may also be used to coordinate efforts.

4.3 Any communications required by the communications coordinator should be established with the Controller and/or CEO and approved before publishing.

4.4 All press enquiries should be reported to the Controller who will liaise with the Communications Co-ordinator to prepare a statement.

4.5 The Central Coordinator will co-ordinate our response from the office taking instruction from senior staff on tasks, assigning tasks to appropriate staff members, cascading information and receiving instruction from senior management both on and off site.

4.6 As information and documents are collated throughout the response, these should be sent to the Central Coordinator and stored in a central location for ease of access and the document management system, INVU. The communications coordinator will oversee this with assistance from the Corporate Governance Officer where appropriate.

4.7 The following tasks are likely to be needed to be completed, depending on the nature of the incident. The Central Coordinator will coordinate these across relevant staff keeping the controller and CEO updated at all times, and following further instruction from Controller:

- Obtaining and sharing information with staff on site and in the office:

- **Property Coordinator** will share property information as required e.g. fire risk assessments, health and safety checks, number of flats, building structure and make up.
- **Operations Coordinator** will share Tenancy information as required e.g. support needs, flags on the system, next of kin contacts, social service/support worker contact and history, length and type of tenancy
- **Corporate Services Coordinator** will share incident information as required e.g. London Fire Brigade response details from their website.
- Organising immediate making safe works
 - **Property Coordinator** will liaise with on-site staff and in the office repairs teams to contact contractors and arrange orders.
- **Property Coordinator** will lead on organising remedial works
- **Operations Coordinator** and **Communications Coordinator** to communicate with residents
 - This is likely to include briefing staff in the office on the incident and what to tell locally affected residents as well as ensuring staff on site are located and residents know where to access them.
- **Operations Coordinator** to communicate with other stakeholders
 - For example, liaising with social services, the local authority, the police or fire brigade.
- **Corporate Services Coordinator** to communicate with staff
 - Liaising with staff on site and relaying messages to office-based staff and vice versa.
 - Ensuring staff on site have everything needed to relay to relevant services and affected tenants.
- **Operations Coordinator** to arrange for alternative accommodation via ICAB
- **Property Coordinator** to notify insurers and liaise with the incident team they will set up.

5. Safety of Residents, staff and others

- 5.1 Safety of residents is paramount. Actions to keep those directly affected safe from harm will be prioritised. This may mean emergency repairs to make safe, moving residents and staff to a place of safety and may involve contacting the emergency services.
- 5.2 Staff should not put themselves in danger in an attempt to help others and during the incident and management of it, will be instructed not to.
- 5.3 If it appears that residents cannot remain in the property safely we may arrange emergency accommodation for immediate use through our approved contractor ICAB. For ongoing housing need we will work with the local authority to provide housing. Whilst this is being organised, we will assist those affected to find somewhere safe to stay by making available our common rooms in sheltered schemes or by asking the local authority or local voluntary agencies to help.

- 5.4 Where a resident is facing financial hardship we may support with reasonable travel and subsistence expenses in the immediate aftermath of a major incident, this requires a resident to meet the criteria of our Welfare Fund Policy.

6. Information provision

- 6.1 We will keep residents, staff and others such as neighbours informed both in the initial stages and throughout the incident. We will identify the most effective means of keeping people informed and providing reassurance. We will keep organisations informed, including statutory authorities, external service providers, the Social Housing Regulator, the press and our insurers.

7. Property Safety

- 7.1 We maintain a panel of contractors who are able to attend in an emergency and these arrangements are reviewed regularly. We will ensure that property and services are made safe and restored to working order as quickly and efficiently as possible.

8. Major incidents not affecting our properties

- 8.1 In the case of a major incident which has not directly affected our properties or residents an email should be circulated to EMT outlining the known details of the incident including location and all managers should report the whereabouts of their teams conducting their duties that day.
- 8.2 Any staff who are known or thought to be in the area of the major incident should not be called if the incident is a terrorist incident (vibrating or ringing phones can give away the location of where someone is hiding) instead the manager should await contact from the staff member. Once the incident is known to be over, contact attempts should be made. If the incident is not terror related and therefore there is little risk to call the staff member, contact attempts should be made immediately.

9. Declaring the major incident closed

- 9.1 At the point residents are able to safely re-occupy their homes on a permanent basis or have been re-housed, the Controller will liaise with colleagues to declare that the major incident is closed. Staff and residents will be informed by the Corporate Services Coordinator and Operations Coordinator respectively.
- 9.2 We will review all actions to learn from the incident and amend our procedures in the light of this learning.
- 9.3 Affected residents should be written to after the incident sharing relevant information on what we know, and any reassurances we can provide.
- 9.4 As soon as reasonably possible a major incident report should be prepared for SMT and the Board. Information should be readily available to do this using the documentation and information collated throughout the response.

10. Compensation

10.1 We will assess whether payments are due to residents under our Compensation Policy.

11. Governance

11.1 The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the CEO but this is delegated to the Director of Operations.

12. Equality and Diversity

12.1 This policy will operate at all times in accordance with our Equality and Diversity policies.

13. Relevant Policies

Business Continuity Plan
Health and Safety Policy and procedures
Regulatory Requirements
Major Incident Procedure

14. Policy Consultation

14.1 Individuals consulted in relation to the new/revised policy approval should be listed in the table below and all relevant comments detailed.

	Who	Date	Outcome
Resident consultation	RESP	08/04/2024	RESP felt this was an internal policy and did not feel the need to comment
SMT/EMT consultation	SMT	27/03/2024	Policy changes approved
Staff consulted	NA		