HAIG HOUSING
HOMES FOR THE **VETERAN** COMMUNITY

Haig Housing - Fire Safety

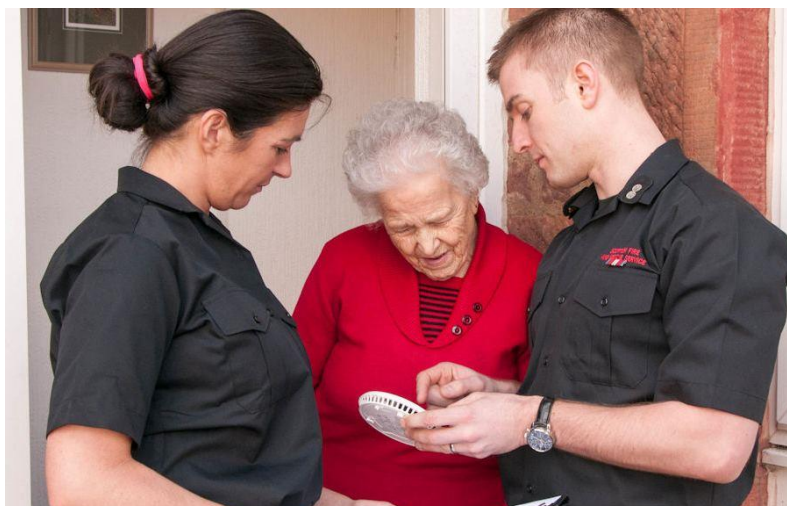# How to keep your home safe from fire

One of our main priorities is to make sure our residents and their visitors are safe in their home and free from harm; all our homes therefore must pass safety checks before they can be used. These checks include protection in the event of a fire, as fires can start and spread quickly putting lives at risk as well as causing significant damage to your home.

Most residential fires are caused due to cooking accidents but some result from cigarettes or faulty electrics.

On average, nearly 60 people die each year because they don't have a working smoke alarm to warn them in time. You should have been told when you moved in to your Haig Housing home about what to do in the event of a fire where you live but, if not, it is important that you contact us now to obtain this information.

What Haig Housing does to help keep you safe:

- We carry out regular risk assessments in communal areas to identify any risks and aim to remove these as quickly as possible before an accident happens.

- We fit smoke alarms in our homes and arrange for those in the communal areas of our blocks of flats to be tested. If you do not have a smoke alarm fitted in your home or block, please contact us and we will arrange to install one for you.

- We check that any fire detection systems and equipment such as extinguishers are maintained in line with legal requirements.

- Where required we install fire doors designed to hold back a fire for between a half hour or an hour, as well as emergency exit signs and lighting in our communal areas to guide you to safety.

Each block of flats has either an "evacuation" or a "stay put" policy depending on the type and size of that block.

How you can help to make your home safe:

1. **Check that your smoke alarm works**

   - We want you to be safe and we recommend you check your alarm once a week to make sure it is working properly.

   - All you should do is press the button on your alarm.

   - If there is no sound, change the batteries. However, if this does not work or there are no batteries (because the alarm may be wired into the electrical supply) please report the fault to our repairs team.

2. **Take extra care when you are cooking**

   - When the cooker is switched on or in use, don't leave children or pets alone in the kitchen and stay alert.

- Keep tea towels, cloths and any other flammable materials away from the cooker.

- Make sure that all the appliances are switched off once you have finished cooking.

3. **Be careful when smoking in your home**

- It is always best to use glass, metal or ceramic ashtrays that don't burn.

- Take care that when you put out your cigarette it is completely extinguished.

- Be alert that if you smoke in bed where you could fall asleep, you increase the risk of starting a fire.

4. **Keep escape routes clear**

- Make sure you have a family plan for how you would escape from your home if there was a fire.

- Make sure that there are no obstructions both inside and outside your home to stop you from escaping safely.

- Do not leave any rubbish or obstructions in the communal areas of blocks that may become a source of a fire or delay people trying to escape in a hurry, especially if there is reduced visibility from smoke.

5. **Check your electrics are safe**

- At night time switch off unnecessary electrical equipment and mains powered air-fresheners at the plug.

- Regularly check for plugs that may feel hot or that have scorch marks. Do not overload plug sockets or extension leads.

- Check that power cables and plugs for your electrical appliances are undamaged and that they have no loose or exposed wires.

- If you have any concerns or feel there is a fault, contact us straight away.

For further advice regarding what to do in the event of a fire you can visit the following web sites which have useful information, relevant wherever you live in the UK:

www.london-fire.gov.uk/SafetyAtHome.asp
www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/what-do-if-theres-fire