

Fire Safety

1. Background

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety Act 2021 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021 and commenced on 16 May 2022 requires Abbeyfield The Dales (ATD) to take responsibility for fire safety management and through risk assessment to put in place control measures to eliminate, reduce and control the risks of fire. From January 2023 the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 (FS(E)R) will impose additional requirements for the RP to consider regarding the type and height of multi-occupied residential buildings under the FSO. These Regulations are known as 'secondary legislation' and support the FSO under Article 24.

The Building Safety Act 2022 (BSA) Section 156 has further amended the FSO in relation to fire risk assessments were 9(A) identifies that where the RP appoints a person to assist with completing an FRA, that individual(s) should be suitably competent (and be demonstrable) against the type of building to be assessed.

Paragraph 21 A also notes that the risks identified within the FRA must also be available to all residents of that building together with any preventative and protective measures together with the organisations nominated duty holder responsible for managing the risks within the FRA.

The Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025 for building 18 metres or 7 storeys above ground level or higher, or over 11 metres above ground level where a simultaneous evacuation strategy are in place (meaning everyone should leave the building if there is a fire, even if you are not directly affected by the smoke from the fire). Requires ATD to make reasonable endeavours to identify residents who may struggle to evacuate without assistance during a fire, offer them a person-centred fire risk assessment, work with the resident (if they choose) to agree a simple emergency evacuation statement (the resident should still phone 999 in an emergency), put in place reasonable and proportionate measures to support their safety, must prepare a building wide emergency evacuation plan and share a small amount of essential information with the fire and rescue service (but only if the resident gives explicit consent to do so).

In general, ATD operates an evacuation policy aiming to secure the safety of all persons within its premises from the risk of fire through direct or progressive horizontal evacuation, full evacuation, or at the request of the Fire and Rescue Services in the event of a fire, or if required alternative and suitably compliant safety arrangements.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 specifically requires ATD to:

- Carry out a fire risk assessment of your workplace (you must consider all your employees and other people who may be affected by a fire in the workplace, and you are required to make adequate provision for any disabled people with special needs who use or may be present at your premises).

- Identify the significant findings of the risk assessment and the details of anyone who might be especially at risk in case of fire e.g. Care Residents.
- Provide and maintain such fire precautions as are necessary to safeguard those who use your workplace; and
- Provide information, instruction, and training to your employees about the fire precautions in your workplace.

Fire Risk Assessments at ATD will be conducted by the Health & Safety Manager (HSM) or a competent external company on our behalf and each will be stored on the internal drive for each property.

Fire Risk Assessments undertaken for ATD will be based on the methodology of PAS 79, approved document "B" and the CLG guidance "Fire Safety Risk Assessment-Residential Care Premises" and all associated documents. ATD will ensure Fire Risk Assessments include the structure, external walls (including anything attached to them such as balconies) and flat front doors leading to communal areas to comply with the new Fire Safety Act 2021, Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and The Building Safety Act.

Property developments that fall under CDM2015 regulations at the following locations are subject to the above legislation, and also the completion of FRA's:

- Residential / Respite Care Homes (high risk).
- Independent Living with extra Care (low-medium risk).
- Supported Living (low-medium risk); and
- Head office (low risk).

The effects of a fire in our properties can be far more serious than in many other types of premises, hence at ATD we classify our premises from low-high risk depending on some of the factors below:

- The limited mobility of the residents and their need for assistance.
- Residents' difficulties in understanding and responding to a fire alarm.
- Problems associated with dementia.
- Residents with mental health conditions that may affect understanding of evacuation requirements.
- At night, sluggishness, and immobility due to sleep or because of medication; and
- Residents using medication or medical equipment.

Older people are at significantly greater risk from fire than other age groups. It is, therefore, vital that appropriate fire procedures and installations are put in place.

2. Objectives

ATD is committed to providing services that enhance the quality of life for older people and developing services that will meet the needs of future generations. This commitment is based on the Mission and Values of ATD. ATD will also comply with all relevant and current legislation.

The aim of the ATD policy is to describe the organisation and arrangements for the effective management of fire safety within all ATD care and office premises. It establishes a fire risk management framework based upon risk assessment and the implementation of control measures to prevent and protect residents, employees, volunteers, contractors, and all property from the risk of smoke, fire, and damage to building structures. Our Fire Safety planning and procedures consider

the specific risks associated with 'at risk' older residents together with the nature and purpose of service activities.

ATD is fully committed to the prevention of fire risks in our premises and managing any emergency should it happen. We will always ensure full legal compliance and that the highest standards of fire safety are provided in all our care premises and in our offices for the safety of residents, staff, visitors, volunteers, and contractors. ATD will fully comply with the new Government Building Safety Bill once this has been passed. ATD are committed that all new buildings will have Non-combustible construction on the outside of all properties (minimum A2 fire rating) 11 meters or over.

3. Scope

All established staff, agency staff, visitors, contractors, and volunteers working in all our premises.

This policy applies to Abbeyfield the Dales Limited and its corporate trustee responsibilities for registered providers Charles Edward Sugden Almshouses, and Frank Crossley's Almshouses, also for the non-registered provider The Pawson Cottage Homes, and its subsidiary Abbeyfield Court Limited.

4. Policy

4.1. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1.1. Chief Executive (CE)

It shall be the responsibility of the CE to ensure Fire Safety is:

- Managed across ATD on behalf of the Directors and the Trustees.
- The Policy is reviewed bi-annually and kept up to date.
- Fire Risk Assessments have been completed and recorded for all ATD premises.
- Resources are allocated to enable, full legal compliance, improvements where necessary, training for managers and staff and to aim for the highest standards of fire safety across the organisation; and
- Overseen on a day-to-day basis by the "Responsible Person," nominated by the CE, to ensure continued day to day compliance is followed and the CE is kept informed on all significant fire issues.

4.1.2. Directors (Trustees)

It shall be the Directors responsibility to:

- Ensure all sites (care premises and offices) in ATD have a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment completed and recorded.
- Ensure actions raised from any fire risk assessment are considered and implemented in a timely manner, with records kept of works undertaken where and when necessary.
- Resources are allocated to the HSM to enable training to be up to date with all legal requirements and new practises.
- Ensure that managers and staff with responsibility for managing Fire Safety have received appropriate "on-line" training from the ATD our training portal and by the HSM; and

- Ensure any Fire Action Notices/Enforcement Notices, or similar, served by Fire Authorities are responded to in a timely manner by the relevant Registered/House Managers. Copies of both above items should be sent to the HSM or information.

4.1.3. Registered Managers/Supported Housing Managers

It shall be the Registered Managers/Supported Housing Managers responsibility to:

- Ensure there is a completed Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for the premises.
- Ensure that all actions identified from the FRA are brought to the attention of Senior Management and upon approval, implemented.
- Arrange for resident assessments to be completed and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS) when necessary.
- Display a summarised PEEPS list next to the fire panel or in the fire box, identifying all residents (or room numbers only) on the premises and which of those would be classed high, medium, or low risk through a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) identification system.
- Complete the Disaster Recovery Action Plan (DRAP) that details the procedures that must be followed when the fire alarm activates, and a full evacuation is required.
- Display the above plan in a prominent location e.g. staff room.
- Ensure that regular maintenance checks are carried out on all fire related equipment whether this be in house or by approved contactors where appropriate and keep written records.
- Ensure fire drills are undertaken and recorded.
- Ensure there is a designated and signed assembly point outside the premises in a safe area.
- Ensure there is a fire plan on display next to the fire panel showing correct zones, escape routes and the location of fire call points, assembly points, firefighting equipment, and any high-risk issues the Fire and Rescue Service need to be aware of e.g. oxygen cylinders used in a bedroom.
- Ensure the no smoking policy is enforced and a designated external smoking area is established with proper facilities for extinguishing fire.
- Arrange for fire training, with the assistance of the HSM, and to ensure staff (both day and night) attend where requested.
- Ensure that appropriate fire signage is provided and displayed in suitable positions and is well maintained, clearly indicating the escape routes.
- Report any areas of concern to their line manager or the HSM.
- Ensure self-closures on all fire doors in the building are checked monthly to ensure they are in good working order.
- Detailed records of all the checks mentioned above must be recorded and kept in the fire logbook.
- A fire box, or fire folder must be next to the fire panel in all our premises, and you must ensure it contains copy of PEEPS summary which indicates which residents and their rooms are classed as high risk (using RAG identification system), 3 laminated copies of the fire plan, a copy of the DRAP; and
- Undertake any scheduled internal fire checklist as required.

4.1.4. Health & Safety Manager (HSM)

It shall be the HSM responsibility to:

- Provide support and guidance on fire safety to the CE, the Senior Management Team, and all Directors (Trustees) as required.
- Provide support and guidance on fire safety to all staff at ATD particularly those dealing with implementing fire action plans for improvements.
- Provide FRA's for any ATD property and properties outside ATD when requested by SLT.
- Ensure hands on fire training courses have been provided so staff can obtain the knowledge to ensure they have the required level of competency to carry out any tasks that are given to them in managing the fire safety issues.
- Keep a master folder of all completed FRA's within ATD ('M' drive).
- Update all documents to ensure they comply with the relevant legislation and ensure they are available to access as and when necessary.
- Monitor the correct implementation and compliance of fire safety at ATD through quarterly and annual on-site audits and give advice to all office staff and managers of supported houses, independent living premises and care home staff where necessary; and
- Give advice to independent living resident where necessary.

4.1.5. Director of Operations

It shall be the Director of Operations responsibility to:

- Ensure all ATD properties review fire safety documentation and PEEPs as requested by the HSM.
- Ensure all staff attend the relevant fire training courses as required.
- Seek advice from the HSM to ensure remedial works are undertaken safely at our premises with contractors.
- Ensure all relevant commissioning and testing is undertaken for remedial works carried out and full records kept.
- Undertake a fire audit within their independent living premises and care homes as required and collate results. Copy to go to HSM.
- Report any concerns to the HSM as necessary.
- Ensure any enforcement notices are dealt with appropriately and an action plan is produced.
- Work closely with the relevant Supported Housing Manager / Registered Manager and the HSM when dealing with enforcement notices and ensure they been copied in on any action plan produced; and
- To report any concerns regarding fire safety to the HSM for advice and assistance when necessary.

4.2. Arrangements for Fire Safety

To ensure that ATD are complying with our legal duty it is important FRAs are completed, and action plans implemented.

FRAs for ATD will be completed by the Health & Safety Manager and an external competent person on ATD's behalf and will be reviewed at least every 24 months for all ATD premises (see comment below in Risk Assessments).

In addition to the above, ATD will ensure a full range of physical controls in all ATD premises are provided for fire safety e.g. fire alarms, smoke alarms, heat sensors, self-closures, door seals, push pads, emergency lights, fire-fighting equipment, training etc.

All these controls will be checked and verified during both the original FRA and whenever the FRA is reviewed.

4.3. Fire Risk Assessments (FRA)

It is a legal requirement that a "suitable and sufficient" FRA is completed by a competent person for all ATD properties. Copies of completed FRAs will be stored on ATD Internal (M) Drive and kept in the FRA folder held at each premises.

The objective of the FRA is to provide an overall assessment of the current level of risk at the premises, bearing in mind current controls, and an action plan on where improvement should be made to reduce that risk further to its lowest level.

All ATD FRAs will be undertaken by the HSM and a competent external company. Action plans in these assessments will be considered by the relevant Housing Manager and the Director of Operations and additional measures implemented to improve standards where deemed necessary.

FRAs will be reviewed/updated if there is:

- Significant changes to work practices or procedures.
- A significant change in the number of people present or the characteristics of the occupants including the presence of people with some form of disability.
- Any significant structural or material changes to the premises (including the internal layout) or to the processes or activities conducted at the premises, including the introduction of new equipment.
- Significant changes to furniture and fixings and/or to displays or quantities of stock.
- The introduction or increase in the storage of hazardous substances eg oxygen cylinders.
- Any change in the fire precautions in the premises.
- Any near miss or fire incident.
- At least every 24 months in all premises, if none of the above apply.

ATD Fire Safety Controls will include precautions such as:

- An individual FRA will be completed for each resident by the site manager. This will be routinely monitored together with the resident's 'My Life Plan/Care Plan' reviews to ensure resident's needs are continually being met.
- PEEPs will be written, where necessary, for any resident and any other disabled or vulnerable person working/volunteering in the premises.
- Providing fire safety information, induction and mandatory learning and development for employees and volunteers.
- Maintenance and inspection of fire safety detection, warning and protective systems, fire equipment and emergency evacuation routes are routinely checked, monitored, and recorded in the fire logbook for all ATD premises.

- Recorded fire drills carried out at regular intervals, at a minimum, twice yearly for all properties; these are monitored and recorded together with any identified actions for improvement of fire safety and evacuation procedures.
- In care homes at least once a year the fire drill will include a full Horizontal Fire Evacuation (HFE) scenario where all care staff will be required to undertake practical evacuation techniques in a residential area/room using a staff member as the role of an immobile resident.
- A building design layout plan which shows the fire protected areas or numbered zones within each premise is displayed next to the fire panel, with 2 copies in the fire box for the fire brigade.
- Fire evacuation and emergency contingency plans are available and easily accessible in all ATD premises and kept up to date.
- Fire audits are carried out on a periodic basis.
- L1 or L2 fire alarm systems installed by a competent contractor throughout; and/or
- Records of checking our controls will be kept in the Fire Safety file at each of our premises.

Each employee, volunteer and contractor all have a responsibility for maintaining fire safety measures.

Fire safety will be promoted and sustained through a pro-active system of consultation with service users, employees, volunteers, and others affected by ATD's activities.

ATD will work in co-operation and co-ordination with authorities, registered bodies, and premises with shared tenancy to promote and maintain effective fire safety management and good practice within its premises.

4.4. New Developments

For completely new build developments a building fire safety manager & safety manager will be appointed by the construction company for all new developments as required by the Fire Safety Bill (2021). Their role will be to ensure fire and structural safety risks are managed day-to-day. They will also ensure a fire strategy and fire management plan is written for the new site manager to follow and to maintain operational fire safety while the building is empty of residents but has construction staff on site and for when the building has been handed over. The fire strategy must achieve the minimum standard required by Part B of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations 2010 (hereafter referred to as Part B).

Fire Safety Information at new building hand over regulation 38 of the building regulations requires that fire safety information must be given to the responsible person at the completion of the works. As a minimum this must include:

- The fire safety strategy.
- Assumptions regarding the management of the building.
- The evacuation strategy/regime and detection system cause and effect.
- Escape routes and muster points.
- Details of compartmentation, cavity barriers, fire doors, fire stopping and opening protectives.

- Smoke detector heads, alarm call points, alarm panels, fire safety signage, emergency lighting.
- As-built plans showing the above.

Abbeyfield The Dales HSM manager will monitor and carry out checks at all stages of building of new buildings and extensions and is authorised to raise all noncompliance as required.

New building extension to ATD existing properties will have fire safety checked and monitored for compliance by the HSM. All new developments will conform with CDM regulations 2015.

4.5. Resident Fire Risk Assessments (FRA)

A resident's FRA focuses on each resident's mobility, comprehension, and their specific needs in an emergency. Residents identified as requiring specific help in an emergency will have a PEEPs form completed by the registered/house manager describing the additional precautions we will have in place to help evacuate that person to a place of safety in an emergency.

Specific actions will need to be developed to improve a residents' understanding, mobility and compliance with fire safety and evaluation given for that resident's ability to evacuate.

Within care homes the RAG identification system will be used dependent on the number of staff members required to assist each resident in evacuating.

	Red: High risk- Two staff members.
	Amber: Medium Risk-One staff member.
	Green: low risk-Can evacuate without assistance

If a resident is identified as 'delayed evacuation', which means they are unable to evacuate without assistance, then this should be marked this as **'RED'**.

Within supported housing the RAG identification system will be used and will be based on whether the resident is able to evacuate on their own or if assistance is required.

If a resident is not able to evacuate on their own then the line manager, the HSA, call centre and the local fire officer/service should be informed. If delayed evacuation is required, this must be agreed with the Fire and Rescue Service.

	Red: Requires assistance to evacuate (delayed evacuation).
	Green: Can evacuate without assistance

Each resident's rating must be included in the Fire Emergency and Contingency Plan and, if applicable on the resident's room doors. The assessment should be reviewed annually or with any change in a resident's condition.

For Independent living a mixture of the two can be used but only where care is part of a resident's package can the red, amber, green RAG system be used to assess the resident.

4.6. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

Each resident, identified by their FRA as needing extra assistance in an emergency, must have a PEEP form completed detailing their personal fire safety evacuation procedure. The following should be included:

- **Awareness of evacuation procedure** - How they will be informed of the evacuation procedure? E.g. instruction, written information, braille, tape, explanation and shown the routes.
- **Alarm system** - How are they warned of a fire emergency? E.g. hearing the alarm system, a visual alarm, vibrating device.
- **Escape Routes or Evacuation Plan** - What are the escape routes for safe evacuation from the house? Do they need assistance with evacuation? Has any other evacuation plan been agreed.
- **Specialist Equipment to assist escape** - What equipment is needed to assist with evacuating? E.g. Walking aids.
- **Level of/any assistance required with evacuating safely;** and
- **Assembly Point** – Is this the same for all residents or different depending on location within the house/care home.

The PEEP should be reviewed 12 monthly or with any change in a resident's condition.

4.7. Fire Emergency Contingency Plan (FECp)

The purpose of the FECp, extracted from the DRAP, is to ensure all staff, residents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors know what to do if there is a need to evacuate the premises safely in the case of a fire.

The FECp should be based on the outcome of the FRAs for the premises and the residents of that premises.

All staff, residents and volunteers must be made aware of the FECp which should be displayed and readily available. Contractors (toolbox talks) and visitors must be made aware of fire emergency evacuation procedures through verbal and written instruction.

All staff on the premises must be allocated designated roles and responsibilities to carry out fire emergency procedures.

All staff must be provided with regular fire instruction and training to carry out fire emergency arrangements.

All staff should be kept informed and up to date with any changes made to the FECp; the most up to date version displayed for all staff to view and a copy held in the fire box next to the panel.

4.8. Fire Safety File

All ATD premises must keep and maintain an up-to-date fire logbook which details each maintenance check that is carried out on the fire equipment that is provided. These checks will either take place in-house and arranged by the manager or where necessary a competent service engineer will be contracted to carry out the inspection. Any faults identified with fire equipment must be reported to the on-site manager of ATD premises and actioned

immediately. Guidance for frequencies of inspections and tests can be found within the Fire Safety File.

4.9. Fire Alarm Tests

The fire alarm in the premises must be tested weekly by someone who has a test key. Each call point must be numbered and tested in sequence. Records of these tests must be kept in the Fire Safety file. If the building has AOV's automatic opening vents which are for the removal of smoke these must be checked and recorded in the fire file at the same time.

4.10. Emergency Lighting

The emergency lighting in the premises must be tested monthly to ensure the designated lighting works correctly and is adequate for the environment considering the escape routes used. The lights should be switched on for a short period of time (10 mins) to ensure they illuminate. This test is supplemented by the six month/annual service (3 hours drop test) carried out by a competent service engineer. Records of all tests must be kept in the Fire Safety file.

4.11. Quarterly Fire Inspection

The Health & Safety Manager (HSM) will carry out quarterly fire inspection on all buildings with communal areas and produce a report of all building of defects found or fire systems not been followed correctly. These actions raised from any quarterly fire risk inspection are considered and implemented in a timely manner by the maintenance manager and the building manager.

4.12. Fire Extinguisher

Some fire extinguishers are to be removed from all buildings, e.g. water, foam, and CO₂. These are to be replaced with P50 fire extinguishers which can be used on class A, B, and for use on live electrical equipment up to 1000V at 1m distance. This will reduce the risk of a person picking up and using the wrong fire extinguisher. Certain fire extinguishers in certain locations will remain the same, e.g. wet chemical in kitchens, CO₂ in kitchens and plant rooms, and fire blankets will remain in all kitchens.

4.13. Fire Drills

Fire drills are to be carried out every six months for all ATD premises. These drills will be used to evaluate whether the current procedures are suitable and carried out without issues and all personnel assisting are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

The names of those attending must be recorded, and a signature sought. Records of these must be kept in the Fire Safety file.

4.14. Premise Information Boxes (PIB)

Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 & Approved Document B make it a legal requirement for all high-rise residential buildings to have secure information boxes PIB's with specified documents intended for use by the Fire and Rescue Service during a fire, as per the FIA / NFCC Code of Practice. While ATD currency does not have any properties that legally require a PIB box (18m) as good practise ATD's two biggest building (Grove House & Fern House) have these boxes and have the required documents x2 enclosed. The Local Fire and Rescues Service have been given keys with name tags for the PIB boxes.

4.15. Fire Doors, Self-Closures and Door Seals

All fire doors, their self-closing devices and protective smoke seals must be checked monthly to ensure they are in good working order, not damaged through wear and tear etc. and records of these checks must be kept in the Fire Safety file. The HSM will carry out quarterly fire inspection on all buildings and produce a report of all building of defects found. Flat front doors leading to communal areas will be checked when the FRA is completed to comply with the new Fire Safety Act 2021 and recorded in the fire file.

4.16. Fire Evacuation Procedure

Appendix A and B show flow diagrams which Residential/Registered managers should follow if the alarm is activated in the premises in a 'stay put' property. Some properties have a full evacuation procedure on finding or hearing the fire alarm. Separate local procedures are in each building. In all buildings on hearing the fire alarm all persons in communal areas will evacuate immediately, trained ATD staff will help with this evacuation.

4.17. Fire Training

Fire Training is a **mandatory requirement for all staff** and the following will be provided by ATD:

- As part of induction, all new staff, including agency staff, volunteers, and ATD staff seconded between ATD premises that are not their usual place of work, are to be given a brief and basic overview to fire safety conducted by the premises manager which will include instructions to all staff during every drill on how they will assist with fire safety management.
- General Health and Safety Awareness training provided by ATD online training platform.
- Maintenance staff fire Safety Awareness training provided by ATD online training platform.
- Basic fire Safety Awareness training provided by ATD online training platform within 4 weeks for all new staff.
- Fire Awareness Level 1 and where required Fire Safety Level 2 training provided by an external training provider or the ATD HSM; and
- Managers at each supported house, independent living premises and care home will give instructions to all staff during every drill on how they will assist with fire safety management.

5. Finance, Value for Money & Social Value

N/A

6. Supported Appendices

Appendix 1: Fire Evacuation Flow Chart-Care Homes (More Than 2 Staff Present)

Appendix 2: Fire Evacuation Flow Chart-Care Homes (Only 2 Staff Present)

7. Linked Policies

Health and Safety (HSF007)

8. Legislation/Regulation

Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (RRFSO)2005

Health & Safety Act (1974) (Sections 2,3 & 4)

The Care Act (2014)

The Housing Act (2004)

Fire Safety Act (2021)

Fire Safety (England) Regulations (2022)

The Building Safety Act (2022)

The Building Regulations 2010 Approved Document B (ADB) Volume 1 (2019 edition complete with 2020 and 2022 amendments)

The Fire Safety (Residential Evacuation Plans) (England) Regulations 2025

9. Review

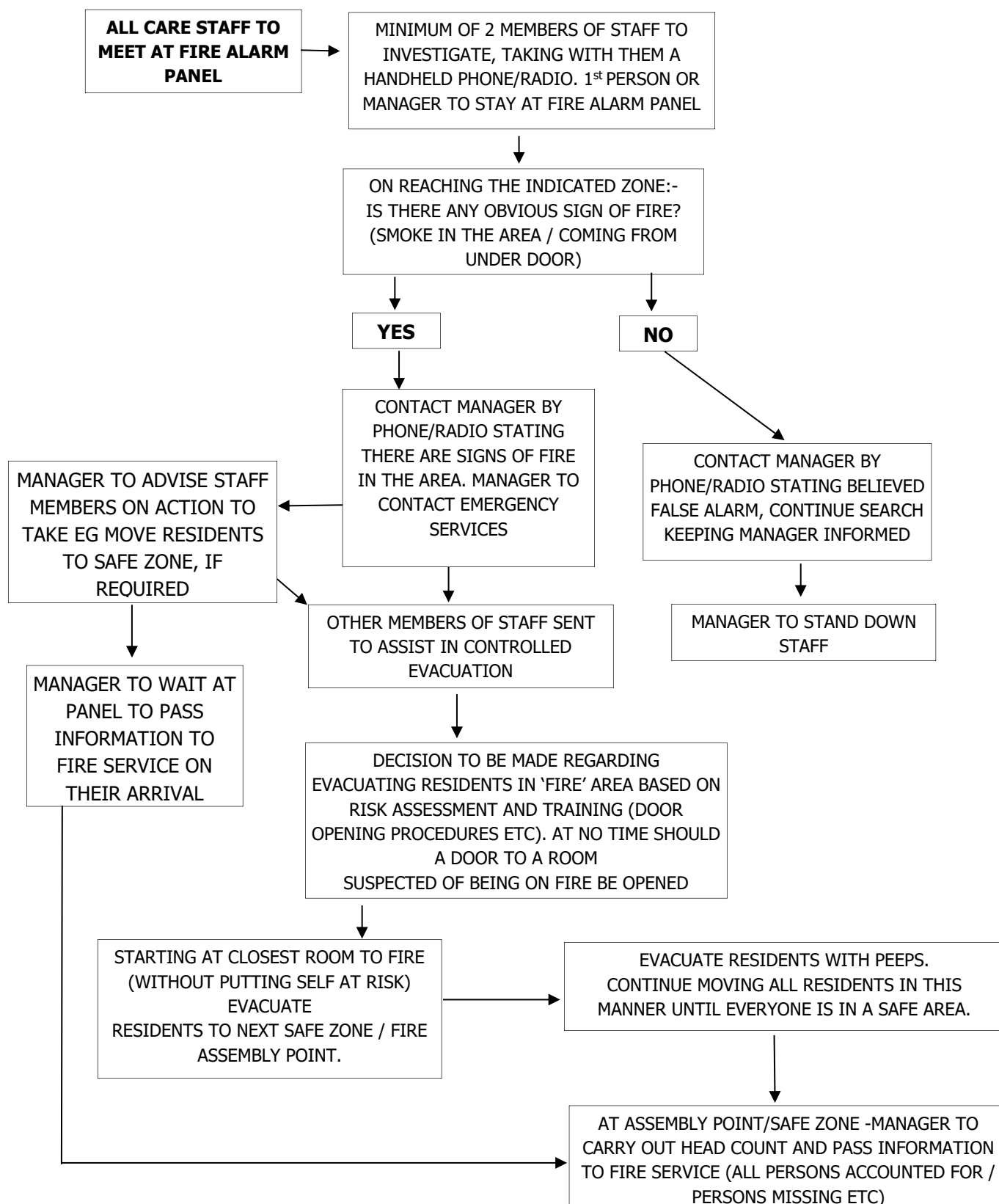
Every 2 years, subject to any regulatory or legislative updates.

10. Procedure/Guidance

N/A

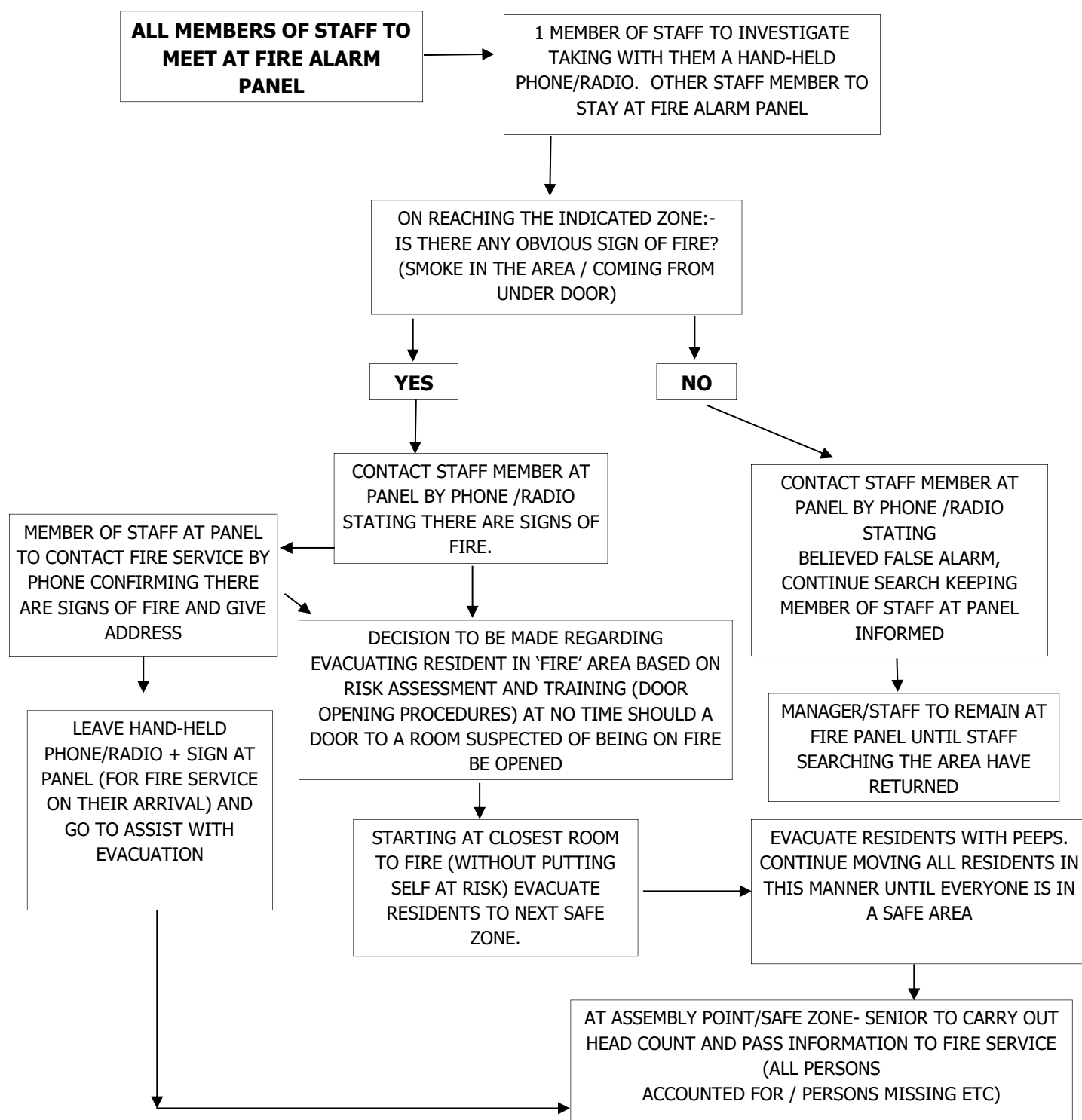
APPENDIX 1- Fire Evacuation Flow Chart-Care Homes (More Than 2 Staff Present)

Action to be taken on hearing fire alarm during the day & night where more than 2 domiciliary/residential staff members are on duty in a 'stay put' policy location.



APPENDIX 2 - Fire Evacuation Flow Chart-Care Homes (Only 2 Staff Present)

Action to be taken on hearing the fire alarm at night (when there are only two domiciliary/residential members of staff on the premises) in a 'stay put' policy location.



Note: When there is only 1 member of staff on duty at night the advice is to contact the Emergency Services and then investigate. See separate local procedures.