Electrical safety policy – version 9.2

Date communicated for use:	Date of next review:
14th April 2026	November 2027

About this policy and who it is for

1.1 This policy is concerned with the provision of safe electrical systems and equipment in premises owned by Dimensions and those occupied by Dimensions colleagues.

1.2 This policy is to be implemented by:

- all Dimensions colleagues
- visitors, and
- contractors.

1.3 This policy is a Dimensions Group policy. This means it applies to all its subsidiaries as listed in **Dimensions Policy Statements**. The document also contains details about, our regulators, equality, diversity and inclusion, data protection, and policy reviews.

The documents, forms and other policies mentioned in **bold** in this policy can be found on the Hub (Dimensions intranet).

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Policy statement (why we have this policy)

2.1 The policy statement describes the approach Dimensions will take to ensure as far as reasonably practicable that whilst using electrical equipment or electrical systems, colleagues and others who may be affected by the undertaking are not exposed to undue risk.

2.2 The policy makes clear Dimensions commitment to provide, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe working environment for colleagues, the people we support, visitors, contractors and anyone else who may be affected by Dimensions work processes.

The impact of not following this policy

3.1 Not meeting our responsibilities in relation to health and safety, may lead to:

- risk of harm or injury including death
- prosecutions
- enforcement action.

3.2 In addition, while health and safety duties are primarily placed on the organisation, individual Directors, Board Members, Trustees, senior managers and other similar officers may be held personally liable under Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 if a health and safety offence takes place because of their actions, agreement, involvement, or failure to take reasonable steps to prevent it.

3.3 In such circumstances, both the individual and the organisation may be prosecuted, with potential penalties including fines, imprisonment and, in the case of Company Directors, disqualification from acting as a director.

3.4 The Health and Safety Executive or other regulators can take legal action to ensure our allocation of responsibilities is suitable and/or incur significant fines. A list of our regulators is available in **Dimensions Policy Statements**.

3.5 As a registered provider of social housing, Dimensions is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. Dimensions must comply with all the Regulatory Standards, including the 'Safety and Quality Standard.' This in turn incorporates the 'Decent Homes Standard'. Should Dimensions' homes fall below any of the required Standards, the Regulator may take action and require Dimensions to take steps to improve. This could damage Dimensions' reputation and potentially, even its ability to operate as a registered provider of social housing.

Risks

4.1 Electricity can kill. Each year 1000's of accidents at work involving electric shock or burns are reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). A large number of these are fatal. Most of these fatalities arise from contact with overhead or underground power cables. Even non-fatal shocks can cause severe or permanent injury. Shocks from faulty equipment may lead to falls from ladders or other work platforms. Poor electrical installations of faulty electrical appliances can lead to fires which may also cause death or injury. Most of these accidents can be avoided by straightforward precautions.

4.2 The risk of injury from electricity is strongly linked to where and how it is used. The risks are greatest in harsh conditions – for example:

- in wet surroundings – unsuitable equipment can easily become live and make its surroundings live
- Outdoors – equipment may not only become wet but be at greater risk of damage
- in confined spaces – if an electrical fault developed it could be difficult to avoid a shock.

4.3 Some items of equipment pose a greater risk of harm than others. An example of this is extension leads which are more likely to experience damage to their plugs, sockets, electrical connections and cables. Other examples are appliances with flexible leads and in particular those which are connected to equipment that is moved around continually as these can suffer from similar issues.

Overview of electrical safety

5.1 Dimensions states that whilst using any electrical equipment or electrical systems, its colleagues, tenants, people we support and others who may be affected by the undertaking are not exposed to undue risk.

5.2 Dimensions acknowledges that it has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of its colleagues, tenants, people we support and of others who work at or visit premises over which Dimensions has control.

5.3 The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 places a duty on Dimensions to comply with the requirements of the regulations. The regulations place a duty on colleagues to co-operate with Dimensions. This policy sets out the responsibilities of Dimensions and colleagues to ensure electrical safety in the workplace.

5.4 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) places a duty on Dimensions to ensure suitable and sufficient work

equipment is provided for colleagues and that it is maintained and inspected at periodic intervals to ensure that it continues to be safe for use. This includes all electrical equipment.

5.5 In addition to these regulations the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulation 12), sets a standard for the safety and suitability of premises and equipment. This is to ensure that equipment used by Dimensions for the purpose of providing care or treatment is safe to use and used in a safe way. Likewise, the premises used or owned by Dimensions are safe to use for their intended purpose and used in a safe way.

5.6 All documentation relating to the maintenance, repair, servicing or testing of electrical equipment and systems must be retained for a period of at least 3 years.

Colleagues' responsibilities

6.1 All Dimensions colleagues have a responsibility to ensure that electrical systems and equipment can without undue risk. Some equipment used by colleagues will not be provided by Dimensions. It will be the property of the people we support, housing associations, private landlords and lease hire/contractors. However, colleagues still have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to protect their own health and safety as outlined in **Section 7 of the Health and Safety at work Act 1974**.

6.2 All Dimensions colleagues will be made aware of the hazards and risks associated with working and using electrical appliances through their initial induction and health and safety training. In addition, a **Location Risk Assessment** must consider any risks in relation to the use of electrical appliances. The findings of the risk assessment will be brought to the attention of all colleagues, who will sign a colleague signature sheet.

Equipment and checks required

7.1 All electrical equipment provided by Dimensions shall be suitable and fit for purpose. All electrical systems and equipment will be maintained in good order.

7.2 Visual checks will be carried out on all electrical equipment before it is used. Any faulty equipment or equipment thought not to be in satisfactory condition will be taken out of use. The fault will be brought to the attention of the owner. The equipment **must not** be used until it has been repaired. If it cannot be repaired, it should be disposed of in line with local authority requirements.

7.3 All repair work on electrical appliances will be carried out by a competent person. A competent person is someone who is deemed to have suitable

training, skill, experience and knowledge for the task. These characteristics should prevent injury to themselves and others. Following any repair, the appliance must be visually inspected and added to any future PAT testing schedules.

7.4 All routine and repair work on electrical systems and its components will be undertaken by a qualified, competent electrical engineer/electrician registered with the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC).

7.5 Locality managers or designated persons will ensure that there are maintenance and monitoring systems in place. See **Building maintenance policy**.

Periodic hard wire test and Part 'P' Building Regulations

8.1 The Head of Property will ensure that a periodic hard wire test is carried out at least every five years or earlier if deemed necessary by a competent electrician. See paragraph **7.4**. If there is no periodic hard wire test, please contact Housing maintenance.

Where upon inspection it is identified that a 10-year frequency for hard wire testing is in place for private landlords, we will look to re-negotiate the terms of the agreement to include the requirement for periodic hard wire testing at least every 5 years or earlier if deemed necessary by a competent electrician.

The competent electrician has a responsibility to ensure a label is affixed to the distribution board which states:

- the date the hard wire test was completed.
- the date it is to be retested.
- the company that carried out the test.

It is the landlord's responsibility to make sure that the electrical systems are in a safe condition.

8.2 The designated person for an office location is responsible for ensuring the following:

- Electrical hard wire testing of the office premises is arranged and conducted every five years as set out in paragraph **8.1**. This may be the responsibility of the landlord of the premises.

What is Part P of the building regulations?

8.3 Since 2005, all work carried out on the electrical installation within a dwelling needs to comply with Approved Document Part 'P' of The Building Regulations 2010 - electrical safety in dwellings. For more information visit: **Electrical safety: Approved Document P - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**.

What electrical work does this law cover?

All electrical installation work in the dwelling, garden, conservatory or outbuilding must comply with all the relevant requirements of the Building Regulations, including Part P. Compliance with these regulations should ensure the likelihood of fire and electric shock is significantly reduced.

Who is responsible for making sure any work complies with Part P?

By law where a premise is owned by Dimensions, a housing association, a private landlord or another they must prove that all electrical wiring meets Part P, or they will be committing a criminal offence. The Head of Property will ensure that other landlords are held account for their obligations.

Local authorities can make homeowners or landlords remove or alter any work that doesn't comply with the Building Regulations.

Portable appliance testing (PAT)

9.1 All portable electrical equipment (any electrical equipment that has a plug attached to it) that is owned by Dimensions and used by colleagues and may be used by people we support must be inspected and tested as required and in line with HSE guidance. These tests will be completed by a competent person to ensure they are safe to use at the time they are tested. The competent person must provide a register of appliances tested. This register must be provided to each dwelling/office. New equipment should be supplied in a safe condition and not require a formal portable appliance inspection immediately. However, a simple visual check is recommended to verify the item is not damaged. New equipment brought into the property should be highlighted on the next round of PAT testing.

It is strongly recommended that any portable electrical equipment owned by supported person which is not used by colleagues is also included in any testing schedules.

Any portable electrical equipment used by colleagues that is the property of a person we support should be included in testing schedules. If the

supported person does not wish to have their equipment PAT tested, it is recommended that this equipment be used with RCD protection (Either as part of the consumer unit or by use of a second RCD adapter. If this is not possible then as a minimum measure colleagues should complete a visual inspection of the equipment. If any signs of damage that can include scorch marks, overheating, exposed wires, excessive wear and tear, frayed wiring or other obvious damage are identified then the equipment should not be used and removed from use until repaired or replaced.

9.2 A contractor, approved by the procurement manager will carry out PAT testing every two years at dwellings and offices controlled by Dimensions (home workers please refer to paragraphs **9.6 to 9.9**). The test results must be kept on file at the premises along with the following information:

- the address of the establishment
- the appliance number
- the location of the appliance – for example kitchen, bedroom
- a description of the appliance – for example kettle, toaster
- whether the appliance is a class 1 (earthed) or class 2 (double insulated) item
- a record of visual inspections of all component parts of each item – that is, plug, cables and terminals
- confirmation that the fuse is correctly rated for the appliance
- insulation test
- earth bond for class 1 appliances.

9.4 On occasions equipment is brought to the place of work by colleagues (for example, kettles, coffee percolators, electric fans and phone chargers). Use of such equipment should be controlled and visually inspected before use. It should be included in the maintenance plan for PAT testing if the equipment remains at the property on a long-term basis (over 1 year).

9.5 The designated person for premises controlled by Dimensions is responsible for ensuring the following:

- regular visual checks on all the electrical appliances
- that any faulty equipment is removed from service.

It is recommended that a label is affixed to all electrical appliances that have been PAT tested stating the date of the test.

9.6 Home workers will be provided with all electrical equipment necessary to undertake their role. Visual checks will be carried out on all electrical equipment before it is used. Each month, check the safety of your electrical equipment and record that the checks have been completed on

the Monthly equipment check form. Before completing a user check, please ensure all of your equipment is disconnected. A user check involves looking for:

- damage to the lead including fraying, cuts or heavy scuffing, e.g. from floor box covers
- damage to the plug, e.g. to the cover or bent pins
- tape applied to the lead.
- coloured wires visible where the lead joins the plug (the cable is not being gripped where it enters the plug)
- damage to the outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws
- signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug, lead or piece of equipment
- equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions, such as wet or dusty environments or where water spills are possible
- cables trapped under furniture or in floor boxes
- the electrical equipment is being used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- the equipment is suitable for the job
- there has been any change of circumstances.

9.7 When deciding whether to test electrical equipment, you need to consider the type of construction of the equipment in use. For home workers, depending on the equipment, it is recommended that equipment be tested every 5 years if the equipment hasn't been replaced during this time. For further information please see **https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf**

There are two basic types of electrical equipment construction – Class I (earthed) and Class II (double insulated):

- Earthed equipment: For safety reasons, Class I equipment has an earth connection. If there is a fault within the equipment there is a possibility that the outside of the equipment could cause an electric shock if the earth connection is not there. As a result, it is recommended that Class I equipment has a portable appliance test to ensure the earth connection is sound. Please read the guidance contained in the Monthly equipment check form for frequency of any portable appliance testing applicable.
- Double insulated equipment: Class II equipment is sometimes referred to as 'double insulated' equipment. Class II equipment does not need an earth connection to maintain safety. It will not need a

portable appliance test, although you should ensure that user checks and visual inspections are carried out as the integrity of the equipment casing is a key safety feature. Class II equipment is marked with this symbol:



If you cannot see this symbol, you should assume that the item is a Class I appliance and carry out a portable appliance test, further guidance is contained in the Monthly equipment check form.

9.8 Where home workers purchase any other Portable Electrical Appliances which are paid for by Dimensions such as fans, extension leads, etc. whilst they are purchased by Dimensions, Dimensions will not be the owner of any such equipment as we will not ask for the equipment to be returned, you will be the owner and will be responsible for the electrical safety of the item as a personal belonging.

9.9 Any issues with your Dimensions owned equipment or with the carrying out of the monthly equipment check should be reported to your Line Manager who will arrange for it to be repaired or replaced. For further information please see **https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf**.

Basic rules

10.1 Be aware that electricity can be dangerous.

10.2 Ensure electrical systems and equipment are in good working condition and report any defects immediately.

10.3 If an electrical plug or socket shows any signs of scorching, do not use it. Report at once to your line manager for attention

10.4 Do not use electrical appliances with wet hands and avoid touching plugs or electrical sockets.

10.5 If an electrical plug or socket is cracked or broken do not use it. Have this replaced by a competent person and alert others to avoid them attempting to use them

10.6 If an electric appliance has a damaged, cut or a broken lead do not use it. Report at once to your line manager and remove the appliance so no one else can use it.

10.7 If the fuse blows or the circuit breaker trips out you must contact the landlord or housing association so the issue can be addressed by a competent electrician. If the issue impacts a piece of equipment that is critical to the health of a person we support or colleague, then you must immediately raise this to your manager.

10.8 When using electric equipment outside, for example, lawnmowers, drills, hedge trimmers, a residual current device (RCD)is recommended. The fuse/circuit breaker protects the electrical circuit whereas the RCD will protect you. Where RCD protection is provided, to either that circuit or group of circuits, on the electrical consumer unit the use of a second RCD adaptor is not required.

10.9 Only use electrical equipment for its intended purpose and in the correct manner:

- when charging electrical equipment, you must only use the manufacturer's supplied/approved charging equipment
- electrical equipment must only be used in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines, and you must not make any alterations or adaptations to electrical equipment
- ensure that any attachments, such as bulbs or fuses, are correctly rated for the equipment they are being used in.

10.10 Do not use any electric appliance outside in wet conditions – for example lawn mowers, hedge trimmers.

10.11 Special attention needs to be given to extension leads, which can be a source of great danger, and equipment that is continually being plugged in and out – for example vacuum cleaners and electric kettles. All extension leads need to be fully uncoiled when in use. If the constant use or need for extension leads cannot be avoided the provision of extra sockets may need to be installed. It is recommended that either RCD or surge protected extension cables are used.

10.12 It is never acceptable to 'daisy chain' extension leads. This is where an extension lead is plugged into another extension lead. This practice will place an excessive amount of electrical load into one part of the electrical circuit.

Faulty equipment

11.1 Do not use any faulty equipment or appliance. Report the fault to your line manager for their attention. Make other people including colleagues, contractors and persons we support aware of any defects.

11.2 Although simple repairs like tightening a loose screw, changing a plug and replacing light bulbs can be carried out by most colleagues, all mains electrical repairs must be carried out by a qualified electrician.

Maintenance

12.1 Maintenance can be defined as 'work carried out in order to keep or restore the electric systems and appliances to an acceptable standard'.

12.2 Dimensions acknowledges the importance of implementing an ongoing maintenance programme of fixed electrical systems and appliances. With this in mind, the following will be adopted:

- A competent qualified electrician, under a planned maintenance programme, will test the mains electrical system every five years as stated in paragraph **7.1**
- No work is to be carried out on an electrical system unless it has been isolated. There is a difference between 'switching off' and 'isolating'. Isolating refers to depriving equipment of electrical power from any source with additional steps being taken to ensure that it cannot be inadvertently re-connected. This is accomplished by switching off the control panel, displaying a notice saying, '**DO NOT USE'**, pulling out the plug from the appliance and informing every one of the need not to put the plug back in until the work is finished.
- The electrician must inform the designated person and persons who may be affected by their work of their plans and intentions.
- Recording of any results and maintenance carried out will provide a base line figure for assessing any subsequent deterioration in the equipment or appliances.
- All colleagues need to be aware of the need to carry out a visual check of all appliances before use and what action to take if they suspect equipment is faulty – for example a cracked plug on the vacuum cleaner.
- All Dimensions owned portable appliances (any electrical appliance with a plug on it) are to be checked every two years at dwellings and offices controlled by Dimensions (home workers please refer to paragraphs **8.6 to 8.9**) by a competent person. See **Portable appliance testing (PAT)**.
- For Premises that have gardens which regularly require the use of electric lawn mowers or hedge trimmers by colleagues, it is recommended that an RCD (Residual current device) is used and that a visual inspection must be completed before and after use.

Legislation and external guidance

This policy and related procedures consider the following legal requirements and regulatory codes, standards, and guidance:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)
- The Waste Electric and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013.
- The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Approved Document Part 'P' - The Building Regulations 2010
- Care Quality Commission's Fundamental Standards – (The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014)
- Electricity at Work HSG 85 (Third Edition)
- Maintaining Portable Equipment HSG 107 (Third Edition)
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

Dimensions related guidance, procedures, forms, or flowcharts

- **Monthly equipment check form**

Ownership and approval

Policy owner	Head of Property and Housing Supply
Policy Responsible Executive Lead	Chief Housing and Commercial Officer
Approval level	Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)
People and groups consulted	Group Head of Health and Safety Health and Safety Advisor Housing Compliance Manager Housing Team Diversity Matters National Colleague Forum Policy Subgroup
Policy review period	Three yearly

Version control

Version number	Approved date	Communication date	Summary of changes
9	**7th November 2024 (FRC)**	**12th November 2024**	Reviewed and updated to latest Group policy standards and language. Change of policy owners (co-ownership – Health and Safety, and Housing). 'Risks' moved to start of policy (now section 4), therefore following sections renumbered. Whole policy updated.
9.1	**11th February 2025**	**25th February 2025**	9.7 updated about testing equipment for home workers.
9.2	**19th March 2026**	**14th April 2026**	Updated to latest Group policy standards. 6.2 Hazard analysis removed and replaced with **Location Risk Assessment**, and the

			following sentence removed: If measures to control the risk are not sufficient a risk assessment will be completed.