



**NAAPS Code of Practice on Fire Safety for
Shared Lives (Adult Placement) Services and
Carers in Scotland**



**Chief
Fire
Officers
Association
Scotland**

CFOA(S)

**CFOA Scotland
Fire Safety Legislative Forum**

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NAAPS Policy and Procedure on Fire Safety for Shared Lives (Adult Placement) Services and Carers in Scotland

Dear Anne,

CFOA (S) would like to support the NAAPS "Fire Safety Policy and Procedure for Shared Lives (Adult Placement) Services and Carers in Scotland".

In doing so CFOA (S) recognises the fact that these Services take place in ordinary family homes and that no legislation applies to this arrangement, but that the Policy and Procedures aim to provide guidance and support on the best practice to those involved in the Scheme.

The documents give sound common sense advice, based on those taken by any responsible householder, and where there may be some concerns raised through the specific circumstances of the property, then advice should be sought from the local Fire and Rescue Service.

Yours faithfully,

**DANIEL DOHERTY (CHAIR)
CFOA (S) LEGISLATIVE FORUM**

**Code of Practice on Fire Safety in Shared Lives (Adult Placement)
Services
Guidance for Schemes in Scotland**

June 2009

www.naaps.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

This Code of Practice on Fire Safety has been developed in consultation with:

- Chief Fire Officers Association Scotland Fire Safety Legislative Forum
- Scottish Government Primary & Community Care Directorate, Adult Care & Support Division
- Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (Care Commission)
- NAAPS members

In 2005 a Fire Safety Code of Practice was produced that described guidance on fire safety for Shared Lives (Adult Placement) services in England. This document establishes the position in Scotland recognising that Shared Lives arrangements take place in ordinary domestic dwellings and that those services fall out with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 but aims to provide good practice guidance on fire safety for those involved in Shared Lives services.

It is intended to provide common guidance to Fire & Rescue Services, local government bodies and those responsible for the regulation and inspection of social care provision and Shared Lives workers involved in approving, monitoring and reviewing Shared Lives carers.

The Fire Safety Code of Practice provides guidance on fire safety in Shared Lives arrangements that ensures high precautionary standards but takes account of the fact that Shared Lives arrangements are provided in ordinary family homes.

The Care Commission does not inspect or regulate anything to do with fire safety but if anything of significant concern were to be observed during an inspection this would be passed back to the Shared Lives scheme and the local Fire & Rescue Service.

The Code supports NAAPS commitment to ensuring the safety of people in Shared Lives arrangements and provides a regulatory regime that is both rigorous, yet appropriate recognising the ordinary domestic nature of these arrangements.

Relevant Legislation and Statutory Guidance

Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001

The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002

The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2006

National Care Standards – Adult Placement Services

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Management of Electricity at Work Regulations (1989)

Gas Safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

June 2009

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Fire (Scotland) Act 2005
Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Homes in Multiple Occupation).
Fire Safety in Adult Placements. A code of practice 2004(England)
Practical Fire Safety Guidance : Evacuation of disabled persons from buildings
Learning the Ropes Health & Safety Checklist

Information is also available from www.info.scotland.com/firelaw

Fire Safety Policy

The Scheme Manager is responsible for ensuring that Scheme Workers understand the Fire Safety Code of Practice and provide SL Carers with the scheme Policy and Procedure on 'Fire Safety' and with any support and learning that they need to put the Policy and Procedure into practice.

Carer Assessment

The Shared Lives Worker together with the prospective carer will carry out, as part of the assessment process, a health and safety and fire safety risk assessment of the prospective carers' home. This will be reviewed by the Shared Lives Worker and will be included in the papers presented to the Independent Panel which decides whether the prospective Carer can be approved.

Special Circumstances

The risk assessment carried out by a Shared Lives Carer with the Shared Lives Worker for an individual service user might identify the need for additional fire precautions (eg where the service user has mobility problems, which may seriously impede their safe evacuation from the house in the case of a fire or if they are inveterate smokers). In such cases, the Shared Lives Carer (with support from the Shared Lives Scheme) and in line with the "Evacuation of Disabled Persons from Buildings" guide will take advice from the local Fire and Rescue Service.

The Shared Lives Scheme and Shared Lives Carer should be aware that additional fire precautions may be needed for a 'non standard house' (ie a house on more than two stories). The Shared Lives Service, in such cases, should support the Shared Lives Carer to take advice from the local Fire and Rescue Service.

Where the service user's bedroom is in the basement of the house, there must be a direct escape route from the basement.

Where more than two people are supported in a placement this will be subject to licensing as a House in Multiple Occupation under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation) Order 2000(S.S.I 2000/177)

(Adapted from NAAPS Fire Safety Code of Practice 2004)

Pre placement training

- The Shared Lives Scheme will make sure that prospective Shared Lives Carers, before they have their first placement, receive training to ensure that they understand

relevant legislation and its practice implications including health & safety and fire safety. This might include a home visit from the Fire and Rescue Service

- It is the responsibility of the Shared Lives Scheme to ensure that Shared Lives Carers understand and adhere to the Code of Practice on fire safety in Shared Lives services.

Ongoing training and development

- The Shared Lives Scheme and the Shared Lives Carer, as part of the annual review of the work of the Carer, will review the health and safety and fire safety risk assessment of the Carer's home.

Placement procedures

- The Shared Lives Scheme, with the Shared Lives Carer and the service user and/or their representative, will develop a Service User Plan/Agreement which describes the services and facilities to be provided by the Shared Lives Carer, and how these services will meet the service user's changing needs.

The Plan will also:

- Set out assessed risks and risk management strategies including a record of agreed action to manage identified risks and hazards, and any advice necessary for service users about their personal safety
- Include any identified fire safety risks specific to the individual service user eg where the service user has limited mobility; is a heavy smoker etc (see **carer assessment**)

Fire Safety Code of Practice for Shared Lives (Adult Placement) Services in Scotland

Guidance for Carers

- Standard 3.5** You can ask for, and be given, confirmation that the service meets with all the applicable legislation and guidance relating to fire, health and safety procedures, and risk management
- Standard 4.3** You receive information about what to do if there is a fire or other emergency in your adult placement carer's home

Background

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- Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care (Care Commission)
- NAAPS members

In 2005 a Fire Safety Code of Practice was produced that described guidance on fire safety for Shared Lives (Adult Placement) services in England.

This document establishes the position in Scotland recognising that Shared Lives arrangements take place in ordinary domestic dwellings and that those services fall out with the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 but aims to provide good practice guidance on fire safety for those involved in Shared Lives services.

It is intended to provide common guidance to Fire & Rescue Services, local government bodies and those responsible for the regulation and inspection of social care provision and Shared Lives Workers involved in approving, monitoring and reviewing Shared Lives Carers.

The Fire Safety Code of Practice provides guidance on fire safety in Shared Lives arrangements that ensures high precautionary standards but takes account of the fact that Shared Lives arrangements are provided in ordinary family homes.

The Care Commission does not inspect or regulate anything to do with fire safety but if anything of significant concern were to be observed during an inspection this would be passed back to the Shared Lives Scheme and the local Fire & Rescue Service.

The Code of Practice supports NAAPS commitment to ensuring the safety of people in Shared Lives arrangements and provides a regulatory regime that is both rigorous, yet appropriate recognising the ordinary domestic nature of these arrangements.

Introduction

A Shared Lives Carer is someone who offers accommodation and support in their own home to a person requiring support. A Shared Lives Carer must be approved and supported by a Shared Lives Scheme. A Shared Lives Carer provides care or support to one or two service users and generally all carers occupy 'traditional' dwellings. If more than **two** people live with a Shared Lives Carer, this has to comply with Houses in Multiple Occupation requirements

People living with Shared Lives Carers highly value the domesticity and homely nature of the arrangement. Private dwellings that are used for Shared Lives arrangements should not present an additional risk to life from fire when compared to a single-family dwelling. For these reasons there should be no need for fire precautions additional to those taken by a responsible householder.

Fire Precautions in Shared Lives Arrangements

Fire Plan

It is important that Shared Lives Carers know what to do in the event of a fire and that they make a fire plan. This should include:

- **An evacuation plan with an external assembly point.**
- **The location, operation and safe method of use of any fire fighting equipment.**
- **Escape routes that are known, unobstructed and free from trip hazards.**
- **The means of raising the alarm in the event of fire.**
- **How to call the Fire and Rescue Service in the event of fire.**

Carers need to ensure that the fire evacuation plan is explained to each of the people being supported.

Escape Routes

- Escape from one or two storey dwellings is generally simple. Therefore, it is unlikely that additional provisions will be necessary beyond ensuring that each habitable room either opens directly onto a hallway or stairway leading to the exit of the dwelling or that it has a window or door opening directly to open air through which escape could be made.
- All exits should open easily from the inside, preferably without the use of a key. Shared Lives Carers are not, however, expected to compromise the security of their homes. Everyone in the household can be safe, as well as secure, provided that they make sure that they can easily open doors and windows. Keys for this purpose should be easily accessible and kept close to the exits. The evacuation plan should ensure that everyone in the household knows where such keys are kept. It is preferable that exit doors are not locked and are instead fitted with 'Turnbuckles' and that keys remain in window locks whilst the house is occupied.
- Common areas and escape routes should be kept free from any obstruction and should not be used to store any combustible material.

Special Circumstances

- The fire risk assessment carried out by the Shared Lives Scheme Worker and the Shared Lives Carer for an individual service user might identify the need for additional fire precautions (eg where the service user has mobility problems which may seriously impede their safe evacuation from the house in the case of a fire or if they are smokers). In such cases, the Shared Lives Carer with support from the Shared Lives scheme will take advice from the local Fire and Rescue Service for general fire safety matters.
- The Shared Lives Carer should be aware that additional fire precautions may be needed for a 'non standard house' (ie a house on more than two stories). Where the service user's bedroom is in the basement of the house, there must be a direct escape route out of the house from the basement
- The Shared Lives Scheme, in such cases, should support the Shared Lives Carer to take advice from the local Fire and Rescue Service

Fire Warning Systems

It is considered sufficient for smoke alarms to be installed in circulation areas only. The recommended minimum is for ten-year smoke alarms with sealed battery units to be fitted. Where premises are fitted with smoke alarms which are battery-powered with short life batteries these should be replaced with ten-year smoke alarms with sealed battery units.

Smoke alarms should be fitted as follows:

- In a dwelling that has service user accommodation on more than one storey, there should be at least one self-contained smoke alarm at each available storey level. If more than one self-contained smoke alarm is required in the premises; consideration should be given to connecting them together, so that they all operate their warning signal if any one detector activates. The alarm signal must be capable of being heard throughout the building for all persons within the premises to react and take appropriate action required for their safety. This should only be necessary if the building is of such a size or design that the operation of one detector may not give sufficient warning audibility throughout the premises. The manufacturer's instructions about the maximum number of alarms that can be interconnected should be followed.
- Each self-contained smoke alarm should be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Self-contained smoke alarms must be accessible to carry out routine maintenance, such as testing and cleaning, easily and safely. For this reason, a self-contained smoke alarm should not be fixed directly over a stair shaft or any other opening between floors.
- Smoke alarms should be tested weekly by using the test button on each smoke alarm, and be cleaned annually according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- Mains-powered alarms are obviously to be preferred and will automatically be installed in newly-constructed dwellings under the Building Regulations.

- Where a mains-powered system is installed to replace a battery-operated system it should meet British Standard BS5939-6.
- The system should be installed by a competent person who should confirm that the system is installed in accordance with the British Standard. You will need a qualified electrician's certificate when battery operated smoke alarms are replaced by a mains operated (hard wired) detection system.
- The wiring installation should conform to the Institution of Electrical Engineering Wiring Regulations.

Reducing the Risk from Fire

Fire Fighting Equipment

- Shared Lives Carers should keep a fire blanket manufactured to BSEN safety standards in the kitchen and appropriately wall mounted. Other fire fighting equipment is not normally necessary and Shared Lives Carers should be reminded that, should a fire occur, their first priority is the safe evacuation of the occupants of the house.
- If Carers are purchasing a fire blanket this must comply with BS 1869:1997 and should be regularly maintained.

Heating

- The use of portable heating devices having a naked flame should not be used except in emergency circumstances (e.g. power cuts, etc). Where such devices are used in such circumstances, then they should always conform to the appropriate British Standard. On such occasions, the heater should be securely anchored in a safe and suitable position and away from draughts.
- Where a portable heating device is to be used, Shared Lives Carers should carry out an assessment of risk, involving all members of the household, in order to ensure the safety of everybody occupying the home.
- If considered necessary to safeguard the occupants of the dwelling, a substantial guard constructed to BS8423:2002 specification and securely fixed in position should enclose solid fuel fires and open flame heating appliances. No part of the guard should be closer than 200mm from the heat source; otherwise the guard may get dangerously hot.
- Boilers and central heating systems should be serviced annually by a competent professional and in accordance with manufacturers' or British Standards guidance. Gas installations should only be serviced by an engineer registered with the Gas Safe Register (replaced CORGI 1/04/09)

Cooking

- When deep frying, a thermostatically controlled deep fat fryer should be used in preference to the traditional chip pan.

Furniture and Furnishings

- When new furniture is purchased, it should be fire retardant and conform with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 as amended. Fire retardancy means that the ease with which the furniture catches light and the speed with which it burns will be reduced. **It does not mean that the furniture does not burn.**
- Shared Lives Carers should be aware, however, that if their furniture was made before 1988 (the date when the requirements for fire retardancy came into force) that it could be dangerous in a fire because it could catch light very easily and burn very quickly, and also give off very toxic smoke.
- Household members should be asked to take extra care, especially if any of them are smokers, and care should be taken with matches and lighters.

Electrical Wiring

- Electrical equipment is a significant cause of accidental fires. The main causes include:
 - Overheating cables and equipment due to overloading or loose connections
 - Incorrect installation or use of equipment
 - Damaged or inadequate insulation on cables or wiring
 - Combustible materials being placed close to electrical equipment which may give off heat (heat may be generated when equipment is operating normally or when equipment becomes hot due to a fault or inadequate ventilation) and arcing or sparking by electrical equipment.

There should be no obvious defects in the electrical wiring system.

- Sockets and switches should be securely fixed to the wall.
- Flex to electrical appliances should not be run under carpets or be positioned to cause a trip hazard.
- The use of multiple adapters should be discouraged. Only correctly fused extension leads should be used and should be positioned to avoid a tripping hazard. .
- Fuses should be correctly rated for the appliance in use.

Bedtime Routines

A bedtime routine should be followed ensuring that gas and electrical appliances are turned off and that all smoking materials are safely extinguished. Careless use of cigarettes is a main cause of fire in the home and all ashtrays should be emptied in a non combustible receptacle.

All room doors should be closed at night.