

Report to Resources Committee

9 September 2014



Title: Health and Safety Update

Report of: Support Services Manager

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with a report on the company's health and safety activities for the period April to June 2014.

Background

2. The Safety, Health and Environmental Team ("SHE Team") are responsible for a number of activities designed to reduce and mitigate accidents in the workplace and to ensure the safety of residents and members of the public who access our services and premises.
3. In addition to this, the team act in an advisory role to ensure company wide compliance with a number of statutory and regulatory requirements including: -
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Health and Safety Training
 - Occupational Hygiene
 - Environmental Management
4. They also have responsibility for ensuring the company's ongoing compliance with statutory regulatory requirements as follows:
 - Water Management - risk assessments and water testing.
 - Electrical Safety - cyclical electrical testing, fixed wire testing, portable appliance testing and emergency lighting testing.
 - Fire Safety - risk assessment, maintenance, repair and testing of fire alarms and fire appliances.
 - Passengers Lifts Operations - lift repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and upgrades to DDA standard.
5. The team are also responsible for the coordination and monitoring of health and safety on construction sites including:
 - CDM Coordination (Construction, Design, Management) and Control of Contractors

- Refurbishment and New Build Works.

Partners Activity Update

6. In the period April to June 2014, we have monitored our partner's activities and reviewed all asbestos related incidents and working practices. Repairs works are visited weekly to ensure compliance with policy and procedures and good working practices. We continue to work closely with Mears Safety Advisors for compliance and safe systems of working.
7. During the period April to June 2014 monthly joint Health and Safety site inspections visits have taken place with Mears. The works visited have covered void property refurbishments, gas boiler installations, bathroom adaptations and general repairs.
8. Inspections include a check of operatives understanding of asbestos information, that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is worn and that dust sheets are used to prevent damage to flooring.
9. There were no significant areas of weakness identified on the site visits. A number of minor recommendations and areas for improvement were identified, including the replacement of identification badges that are damaged within an agreed timescale.

Accident Reporting

Accidents / Incidents near misses TGHC Employees

10. In the period April to June 2014, four non reportable Accidents / Near Misses were reported. There were no reportable accidents under RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Accidents / Incidents near misses to 3rd Party / Subcontractors

11. In the period April to June 2014, there was one non-reportable Accidents / Near Misses reported. There were no reportable accidents under RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Violent Incidents and Warning Alerts

12. In the reporting period April to June 2014, there have been 25 violent incidents. All accidents and reported violent incidents have been investigated and follow up action taken to include a review of safe systems of work.

Asbestos Management

13. Newcastle City Council have a framework in place for asbestos which is currently being used by Gateshead Council for their analytical and consultancy needs in relation to asbestos management. Legal advice has confirmed that the OJEU notice is suitable to cover the Gateshead Housing Company. This will provide a list of companies and fees for us to consider for the delivery of asbestos management and will assist us to implement procedures earlier than planned.

14. The following asbestos surveys have taken place for Refurbishment and Demolition (R&D):
 - 25 surveys for maintaining decency investment works
 - 14 surveys for repairs and maintenance, including gas servicing
 - 21 surveys to void properties and for aids and adaptations.
 - 13 air tests
 - 47 re-inspections of known asbestos containing materials (ACM) in non-domestic buildings
15. During the period April to June 2014, there was one incident reported by a third party that is being investigated by TGHC Health and Safety.

Fire Safety Management

16. Proactive monitoring of our Fire Safety strategy continues to take place through joint working and regular meetings with the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS).
17. The work programme for the Sheltered Housing buildings is progressing with several schemes completed during the reporting period.
18. We continue to review and update fire safety arrangements for the Multi and Sheltered Housing Schemes through fire audits and inspection of all buildings.
19. During this reporting period there were no major incidents to report.

Legionella Control

20. In the period April to June 2014, 12 water hygiene audits have been completed. 67 audits are required in a 12 month period.
21. 180 of 189 (95%) of water hygiene inspection treatments have been completed by Local Environmental services (LES).
22. Risk assessments have been completed and action taken to rectify low risk items including hot water warning notices and training and instruction for weekly flushing in multi-storey blocks and APU's.
23. Orders have been placed with LES for work to Sydney Court tanks and tank lid supports at the Barnes Close blocks.
24. A revised code of practice (ACOP L8) came into operation in April 2014. ACOP L8 applies to water hygiene risk assessments in multi-storey blocks, APU's and communal rooms. The code of practice removes the requirement for a 2 year renewal of risk assessments and replaces it with a requirement to review risk assessments if the water system is altered.
25. ACOP L8 places additional responsibilities on building owners as follows:-
 - Water hygiene risk assessments are now a requirement for all dwellings. Trial surveys are planned in quarter two to understand the level of resources required to meet the requirements of the code of practice.

- Weekly flushing of water systems in void properties. We are currently assessing the resource required for compliance.

Fire Alarm Systems and Sprinkler System

26. 30 (100%) quarterly inspections have been carried out to multi storey blocks and sheltered housing communal areas.

Emergency Lighting

27. 186 (100%) inspections have been carried out to emergency lighting systems. This includes inspections carried out at various intervals in accordance with statutory requirements and the agreed delivery programme with Local Environmental Services, to ensure compliance.
28. 32 (100%) of quarterly emergency light invertors (battery checks) have been inspected in the period April to June 2014.

Wet and Dry Riser Tests and inspections

29. Repairs are planned for wet riser pumps in quarter two. Annual pressure tests for dry risers are due in September and October 2014.

Bin Chute Fire Shut Off Tests and Inspections

30. 25 Certificates of Compliance have been issued which are valid until May 2015. There were no activations or repairs required in the period April to June 2014.

Cyclical Repair and Maintenance Update

31. Bi-monthly meetings with Gateshead Council Local Environmental Services and the Gateshead Housing Company are progressing with the monitoring of the delivery of the cyclical maintenance programme. Inspections of fire alarms, emergency lighting systems and dry and wet risers have been completed in line with the maintenance programme.
32. ICT have developed an automated electronic system to facilitate the uploading of maintenance records into the Northgate system.

Lift Maintenance

33. In the period April to June 2014 the following works have been completed:-
- Park, Peareth & Priory Courts - installation of a new lift
 - St Cuthberts Court - DDA upgrade and new control panel
34. The Eslington Court lift replacement is planned to commence in September 2014.
35. In the period April to June 2014 there were no relevant immediate actions in relation to breakdowns, maintenance or repairs reported and there were no entrapments.

Update on the Company Construction Related Activities

36. There are eight construction related projects ongoing with notifications to the HSE.
37. Works are ongoing on seven projects. Planning of a lift refurbishment in Eslington Court is ongoing.
38. Works are ongoing on eight construction related projects involving multiple sites as follows: -
 - Insulation works to non-traditional properties in Leam Lane
 - Maintaining decency works covering various estates across the Borough
 - Planned painting works across various sites
 - Fire safety improvement works to Sheltered Housing across various sites
 - Barnes Close electrical upgrade works
 - Accessibly improvement works on Multi Storey properties across various sites
 - New Build development of 20 homes
39. Minor non-compliances identified during the site visits have been discussed with the Principal Contractors and remedial actions agreed to mitigate the risk from construction related activities.

Update on Health and Safety Legislation Changes

40. The following codes of practice have been reviewed during this reporting period as follows:-
 - Revision of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and Approved Code of Practice. A radical overhaul of the CDM regulations is being consulted on with respondents given until 6 June 2014 to comment on the proposals.
41. Three employees have attended a CDM coordinators course to assist the company in the management of CDM activity.

Review of Health and Safety function future delivery

42. At the July Board Meeting, the Board approved a number of proposals relating to the future delivery of the Health and Safety function.
43. We have been working with the Council to progress these issues and will be providing Resources Committee with an action plan and detailed update at its next meeting.

Links to Values

44. This report links to the following company values: -
 - Being honest, accountable and transparent
 - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
 - Being caring and respecting
 - A commitment to all our employees
 - Embracing equality.

Impact on Customers

45. The improvements identified and actions carried out will help us to provide healthy and safe environments for employees, residents, members of the public and partners.

Risk Management Implications

46. Not meeting the requirement of current and new Health and Safety legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company.

Financial Implications

47. The Head of Corporate Services confirms that a budget is available to support the activities mentioned in this report through revenue or capital budgets.

Equality and Diversity Implications

48. Detailed Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on all Health and Safety policies and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely impact on any customers.

Value for Money Implications

49. Value for money principles are followed in all health and safety activity.

Health Implications

50. The company's approach to Health and Safety, embedded within everything that we do and the actions specifically mentioned within this report, ultimately will have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing. By working to ensure that any services we provide meet the needs of the customers, partners and of employees and do not cause undue stress to either party.

Environmental Implications

51. The work detailed in this report will be carried out to ensure we meet our ISO 14001 standards and principles. We will make choices that reflect our social responsibility to improve the environment in which we work and live.

Recommendation

52. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the update on health and safety activities and developments.