

Health & Safety Policy for Housing

unipol

the home of student housing

V6

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Introduction

Unipol currently houses around 2100 tenants and its tenant base continues to evolve. The tenant base is diverse and includes international students, first year allocated students, postgraduate and postdoctoral students and a few University staff. These tenants are housed in a similarly diverse portfolio ranging across listed city centre apartments, purpose built complexes and smaller houses and flats.

This diversity, of both tenant and property type presents a considerable challenge in creating a uniform Health & Safety policy. This document draws together and rationalises the various strands of policy and routine in property design and management which have evolved at Unipol over the past 20 years to provide a framework for future Health and Safety matters. It deals with both the provision of new properties and the safe management of the existing portfolio.

Some of the information in this document relates to both legislative compliance and its interpretation. However, because of the nature of the portfolio and legislation, Unipol has moved away from a strict regulatory approach to Health and Safety (whilst maintaining its legal obligations in this area) towards a Risk Based Health and Safety method which identifies hazards and apportions risks to those hazards to better accommodate the varying tenants and property types. Risk assessment provides the opportunity to undertake Health & Safety assessment in a holistic manner rather than judge each facet of regulation in isolation. The assessment has identified a number of areas where Unipol has pro-actively improved its Health and Safety regimes and it continues to encourage a pro-active response to upcoming Health & Safety issues.

Within Health and Safety routines considerable weight has been placed on the integration of certain core routines into the property inspection routines currently carried out by housing management staff. The added verification this will produce will provide a useful additional layer of information about the safety of properties 'in-use' which cannot always be predicted prior to occupation.

This document does not relate to properties Unipol manages from private owners on a year by year basis . These properties use this document as an advisory standard,

Gas Safety

The annual testing and approving of all gas appliances and installations (cookers, gas heaters, hot water and heating boilers and associated pipe work) is set out within a regulatory framework. All properties are tested annually for gas safety purposes in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1994.

Following satisfactory inspection, the pass certificates are returned to Unipol where they are kept on file by property. Every tenant receives a copy of this certificate when they collect the keys for their property. Each gas safety certificate is completed and signed by a Gas Safe registered engineer and the certificate displays the Gas Safe Register logo and registration number of the engineer clearly.

Gas servicing is generally carried out in late summer/early autumn. This means that a copy of the current Gas Safety Certificate can be included in the key pack provided to New to Leeds students at the start of their tenancies.

Wherever feasible, gas safety is further increased by fitting combination boilers rather than separate water and space heating. This reduction in the number of gas appliances provided within a property automatically reduces the risk of a fault occurring.

Certification details are logged in a Health and Safety Database to ensure that all relevant properties comply with these requirements.

Electrical Safety

Electrical safety within the property portfolio is maintained via the following ways:

NOTE: The 17th Edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2008) came into effect on the 1 July 2008. All commercial, domestic and industrial wiring installations after that date must be designed, constructed, inspected, tested and certificated to meet the requirements of BS 7671: 2008. These has some implications on retesting, particularly relating to the extension of the requirement to provide Residual Current Devices (RCDs) on power circuits (Chapter 41) and changes to the provisions required for bathrooms (Section 701). Installations before that date were designed, constructed, inspected, tested and certificated to meet the requirements of the 16th Edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:1992) these installations and accompanying certification will be updated if required as the certification expires.

All electrical installations are certified as safe by a professionally competent electrician, preferably one that is registered with NICEIC – [A 'Competent Person' is an electrician that has been approved by a government-approved scheme as sufficiently competent to self-certify that its work complies with the Building Regulations Part P (Design and Installation of electrical installations) and is designed, installed, inspected and tested to the standard required by BS 7671] in accordance with the current relevant Electrical Regulations.

1. Periodic Electrical Testing and Inspection

Each individual dwelling and landlord supply within the portfolio receives Periodic Inspection and Testing. This provides an overall summary of the electrical fixed wiring system's compliance with relevant regulations and overall safety. The predominant regulations covered are the current Institution for Electrical Engineers Wiring Regulations, BS7671: 2008 including Guidance Note 3 – Inspection and Testing, Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. The testing is carried out by a Part 'P' registered Competent Person. The standards set for non HMO rented accommodation are recommendations only and the Health & Safety at Work Act deals solely with obligations for employees with some effect on residential accommodation where employment liabilities are incurred.

Test Result certificates for every property are kept in the Unipol office and tenants are able to view the documentation on request

Periodic Inspection & Testing generally takes place every five years for each property with the exception of properties rented for single family occupation. These are tested every 10 years, reflecting the fact that the turnover of tenants and the associated risk of electrical failure is decreased. If a recommendation from the testing engineer suggests a more frequent testing period then future testing will follow the recommended period.

2. New Developments/Installations

For all new developments and installations, each property and landlord supply is handed over with an Electrical Installation Certificate, to BS 7671 as above. These certificates are kept in the Unipol office and tenants are able to view the documentation if they wish.

3. Minor Works

Following any minor alterations or additions to existing electrical wiring systems within the property portfolio, all work is documented and tested. A Minor Works Certificate to BS 7672 is then provided and filed in the Unipol office as per the Periodic Inspection and New Installation certificates.

4. Housing Management Inspections

These occur several times within each academic year, both during and after tenancies (see 'Property Inspections' for further details.) Although not providing a thorough electrical inspection, in house staff use the inspections to check the following:

- a) visual evidence of cracking, damage, scorching etc to socket outlets and switches
- b) visual evidence of damage to light fittings and free standing lamps

- c) visual evidence of over occupants over-loading the power outlets
- d) evidence of unsafe practice in use (e.g. poorly located sockets giving rise to trailing cables; damaged light fittings giving rise to poorly illuminated circulation areas etc)

Results from these inspections are noted and any standard electrical repair work required is actioned and monitored by the Housing management Staff responsible (including obtaining any additional NICEIC certification if required above for the work.)

5. Emergency Lighting

Where properties feature emergency lighting, this is tested annually to comply with BS5266: 1988. This involves de-activating the charging supply and testing to ensure that the emergency lights activate without fading for at least one hour. This work is carried out by specialist fire system maintenance engineers at the same time as Fire Alarm checks.

A comprehensive list of Emergency Lights is to be maintained by the Housing Management and Procurement Officer

6. Pro-Active Upgrades of Consumer Units

Regardless of the electrical test results for an individual property, Unipol has undertaken a pro-active upgrade of individual consumer units across the portfolio. All properties now use consumer units with electronic circuit breakers in place of standard ceramic and wire fuse cartridges. These trip out instantly when an unsafe appliance or a fault on a circuit occurs and are fully re-settable once the problem has been resolved. These consumer units protect against serious damage from electric shocks from all appliances used in the property, including the majority of those appliances which belong to tenants. New Distribution Panels Fitted after 1 July 2008 will be of a split panel design with full RCD protection of power circuits in accordance with the 17th Edition of the IEE Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2008).

7. Light Drops and Bulbs

Specialist bulbs and bulbs located within fittings are replaced, on request, by Housing Management staff. Periodic checks are made of communal areas, corridors and stairwells where bulb replacement is the responsibility of Unipol. In some communal areas, light fittings are designed with two bulbs and the areas are well provided by a number of fittings which allows for bulb failure and maintains a good light level. Where tenants are responsible for bulb replacement, light drops have been lowered to allow for ease of access.

8. Portable Appliance Testing (PAT Testing)

Unipol does not generally test portable appliances in dwellings apart from where this is an insurance requirement. Visual checks are undertaken by Housing Management Staff on inspection. Most appliances fitted by Unipol in any event are double insulated or are not able to be tested.

Certification details are logged in a Health and Safety Database to ensure that all relevant properties comply with these requirements.

Security

Each Unipol property is developed to ensure that suitable security provision is provided to the occupants. Wherever possible, all new developments and any upgrade work is carried out to meet current 'Secured by Design' standards.

Security is acknowledged by the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) V2 to be a psychological Hazard. Hazard number twelve entitled "Entry by Intruders" highlights the importance of keeping a dwelling secure against unauthorised entry and the maintenance of defensible space with health effects listed as the fear of burglary occurring, stress and anguish caused by burglary and injuries caused by intruder.

The level of the security provided varies depending on individual locations and circumstances but the following minimum standards are provided throughout the portfolio:

1. Burglar Alarms

All properties where any doors or windows are accessible to the public are provided with a digital burglar alarm. The alarms are installed and tested to BS EN503131/1. Alarm systems are designed to ensure all potential entry points to the property are covered by PIRs or door contacts. Each alarm system is tested every three years by competent alarm engineers. All alarms are fitted with a 20 minute cut off device in the event of malfunction.

Test details are logged in a Health and Safety Database to ensure that all relevant properties comply with these requirements.

2. Protection of Accessible Ground Floor Windows

Where the windows to rooms are accessible to the public (e.g. ground floor or basement floor rooms) plain net curtains to a minimum density of 1.5 x width of window are fitted. This is to deter the potential threat of speculative theft from window sills etc.

Where the threat of theft appears to be particularly high, warning stickers are placed on opening windows to encourage tenants to close all windows when not occupying the room.

In extreme circumstances accessible windows have been fitted with metal window grilles. Where the windows form part of the fire escape strategy for the building, the grilles are fitted internally with a quick release mechanism.

The use of external grilles is avoided where possible by fitting new double glazed windows featuring laminated glazing of 6.4mm thickness to comply with BS7950: 1997 and meeting current 'Secured By Design' standards.

All externally accessible windows are fitted with window locks or (in the case of sliding sashes) are blocked at 4"-6" opening height unless they form part of the fire escape strategy for the property.

3. External Doors

The type of security fitted to external doors varies across the portfolio due to the varying factors of security, fire safety, location, mail delivery and occupancy type. As such it is not possible to categorise sections of the portfolio as up to a certain standard. However, a number of minimum standards and general considerations are always taken into account as listed below:

Door Construction

External doors to all properties are of solid core construction. Where there are glazed sections to the doors, the glazing is either Georgian wired or laminated for increased security. The door frames should be strong and well secured to the jambs. If a door is replaced it is recommended that the full door set will be replaced too, ensuring that this meets with BS: PAS24-1 'doors of enhanced security' – as a minimum

Door Entry Systems

Flat complexes where there are more than two flats served by a central entrance and staircase are always fitted with door entry systems. These feature a call button to a handset in each flat and where possible a remote door release mechanism. This avoids the problem of the front doors being propped open to allow access to visitors.

All door entry systems operate either a servo operated mechanical latch or electro-magnetically locking door. Where servo operated mechanical latches are used they should be of a high security specification.

Residents gain access via either a key switch (suited to their flat and room door locks), a proximity reader which identifies a key fob kept with the residents key or via a digital number punch.

Letter Plates

Where letter plates are fitted in external doors they must comply with BS2911/1974 (1980) and be located a minimum of 400mm away from any locks or be fitted with restriction devices to prevent access to the locking system internally via the letter aperture.

Where several letter plates are fitted in external doors they must comply with BS2911/1974 (1980) and the mail must be collected in individual key lockable compartments so that mail can not be stolen by other residents from within the building.

Locks

Locking provision requires a balance between providing adequate security but maintaining ease of escape in the event of a fire. These two opposite stand points are often in direct opposition to each other (including the positions adopted by the regulatory bodies of the West Yorkshire Police Service and the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service). The occupancy type of the property provides a further variable when carrying out an overall risk assessment. A number of standards have been defined by Unipol for new developments and these are given below. Standards have also been developed in conjunction with Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service regarding fire safety in HMOs. These standards are incorporated in Unipol's standards.

Mortise locks with a boxed keep to BS3621:1998 require a key to unlock both internally and externally. This hinders theft of property by preventing an easy escape route through the front door. However, this key unlocking requirement means that in the event of fire, the occupants would need to locate a key to escape from the building.

Cylinder locks to BS EN 1303 Grade 3 incorporate anti-drill and anti-pick resistance. However, as they use internal thumb turns and often have master keys they do not currently meet the BS3621:1998 achievable with a mortise lock. Many insurance companies are still reluctant to insure possession unless the property is protected via a BS3621:1998 lock. The insurance provided by Unipol within the rent (see below) is valid for all types of locks within our portfolio.

In all new developments, Unipol utilises cylinder operated lock cases which feature a self latching mechanism with an additional mortise throw bolt. This provides the self locking facility of a rim 'Yale' type lock with the additional security of a standard mortise lock, all operated via one key and internally releasable by a thumb turn.

Taking all of the above factors into consideration the following method is used for specifying locks in new developments:

-Family Accommodation

External/flat doors lockable by standard 5 lever mortise or cylinder lock with internal thumb turn.

-Small Properties (1/2bed shared flats, bedsits)

External/flat doors lockable by cylinder lock with internal thumb turn.

-Shared student Accommodation (3+ beds)
Lockable by cylinder lock with internal thumb turn.

-6 beds and above
External/flat doors lockable by cylinder lock with internal thumb turn.

In existing properties the LCC guidelines "Fire safety principles for rented accommodation" recommends that "The final exit door(s) from an HMO or a building containing flats must be fitted with a lock that can be opened from the inside without the use of a key. Similarly doors separating units of accommodation from the escape route must be capable of being opened from the inside without the use of a key such as thumb turn locks. It is estimated that 50% of all other properties are lockable by cylinder lock with internal thumb turn.

Additional Door Security

Where properties feature more than one entrance, the non primary entrance is fitted with either tower bolts or thumb turn bolts. Family properties are fitted with bolts, door chains and viewers to the front door on request.

In some locations, particularly where properties have unobserved back entrances or where there is a history of break ins, additional security is added in the form of hinge bolts, anti-jemmy bars to door edge ("London bars") and frame edge or in extreme cases, metal sheeting to door faces.

Full high security door sets (fully compatible with Secured by Design standards) have also been installed in a number of at risk properties. These feature high security cylinder locks, triple point locking systems, high density laminate door materials with a metal door frame screw fixed directly into adjacent masonry.

4. **Internal Lighting**

All stairwell and communal areas shared by several separate dwellings are well lit to deter intruders.

5. **External Lighting**

Except in locations where lighting from adjacent street lighting provides illumination, properties within the portfolio are fitted with 'dusk 'til dawn' lighting to provide security to the front of properties. This is via low energy light fitting operating via a light cell.

To the rear of properties, where security risk occurs, additional lighting is fitted to deter intruders.

In developments, major thoroughfares are well lit via high power lamps to provide a secure environment for tenants. Where any potentially vulnerable dark areas around the perimeter of sites exist, specific lighting is introduced to reduce the risk of intruders.

Identification of non working external lights is important and Unipol have labelled and numbered all external lights in larger developments so that tenants can report a non working light and contractors can more easily identify where work is needed.

6. **CCTV**

In general, CCTV is not fitted to all properties. Mobile CCTV equipment is used where any specific temporary problems surface. In larger new developments, CCTV is incorporated at a design stage.

CCTV Systems are fitted at:

- New York Street
- Royal Park Flats
- Mill Street
- Garden House (Managed Property)
- Shay Street/Holborn Terrace
- Carlton Hill

- Grayson Heights
- St Marks Court (Managed Property)

Where CCTV is fitted the systems are checked weekly to ensure that systems are in operation. All CCTV systems utilise Digital Video Recorders (DVR) which allow approximately one weeks footage to be retained and saved to CD Rom if required by Housing Management Staff or Police. Most systems have images broadcast to flats to allow tenants to oversee communal areas and car parking in particular.

7. **Garden Maintenance**

Wherever possible, sight lines from the adjoining areas to the property are maintained to provide passive surveillance. Garden maintenance ensures hedges are kept trimmed low and trees are pruned so as not to obscure the properties.

Where low maintenance gardens are laid, the use of gravel or stone chippings as loose aggregate around the building perimeter provides a useful audible warning of any intruders on the property.

8. **External Planning**

On large sites, circulation and landscaping is designed in such a way that there are a minimal number of 'rat-runs' and many cul-de-sacs. Public access entrances are kept to a minimum and are located in readily observable locations. This ensures that any intruders are easily identifiable. It also means that it is difficult for any intruder trying to leave the site to escape without using one of the main entrances.

In individual properties, railings are used to define public/private space for security. Unobserved rear yards are fully protected with locked 1800mm high railings where necessary while lower railings and gates, simply to delineate the space are suitable to front elevations where appropriate.

9. **Tenant Information**

All tenants receive an information leaflet regarding Health & Safety Issues. This incorporates sections about personal safety, safe use of mobile phones etc. Safety and Security posters are displayed in each bedroom in large complexes as well as other third party security information on noticeboards.

10. **Personal Possessions Insurance**

Unipol provides personal possessions insurance (via an external insurance company) to all tenants (apart from 1 bed and family properties). The cost is absorbed within the rent charge. Tenants' possessions are covered as per the terms and conditions set out within the policy which they receive when signing up for the property.

11. **Security Centre**

Unipol operates an out of office hours security centre, currently based at Mill Street. A private firm (currently Securitas) provides dedicated and trained on site staff who currently respond to telephone enquiries outside of Unipol office hours. The security centre is also linked to an emergency call centre who can raise contractors to attend to emergency repairs.

Fire Safety

The fire protection strategy recommended by the local Fire Authority has varied widely in the past. This is the main reason that (particularly in large developments) there is a large variation in the type of fire detection strategies adopted by Unipol.

The current standards are based on LACORS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) published national guidance on fire safety. The new standards on the whole recommend lower requirements than previously. The LACORS standards explicitly state that they do not apply to 'Halls of Residence' these fall under the Fire Safety Order.

A Fire Safety Order has been established as part of the Regulatory Reform process (Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) simplifying the process of licensing buildings for fire safety. The Fire Safety Order makes it a responsibility of the owner of buildings to carry out risk assessment. This does not apply to domestic properties but it does apply to the common parts of Houses in Multiple Occupation (properties let individually and subdivided properties) and large developments. Risk assessments have been undertaken for these properties and template risk assessments developed where properties change over from shared to individual properties.

Current Fire Service advice regarding student accommodation fire safety centres on compartmentalisation and automatic fire detection and the minimisation of false alarms. All of the systems deployed through the Unipol portfolio meet or exceed the statutory requirements for fire protection.

Overall fire safety within the portfolio is achieved by a combination of detection systems, fire fighting equipment, layout design and tenant education. The integrity of these fire systems is then maintained by a structured testing and monitoring regime.

All changes to fire detection and fire fighting provision are confirmed with the WYFRS and are filed in the property's files as well as a central fire service file maintained by the Projects Coordinator.

1. Fire Fighting Equipment

All properties are provided with a fire blanket complying with BS EN3:1996. These are located in the kitchen of the property. Some properties also feature additional water or foam filled extinguishers to communal areas, depending on fire service advice at the time of development. Where possible, additional extinguisher equipment is not installed as following anything more than a small fire tenants should be encouraged to evacuate the building and call the fire service.

2Kg Dry Powder Fire extinguishers are fitted in the kitchens of family properties because of the nature of that tenant group the appliances are less likely to be interfered with and they are more likely to be used in an appropriate manner. In larger property Unipol will make requests to the WYFRS to remove/reduce numbers of Fire Extinguishers in communal areas of larger properties. This will be dealt with on a property by property basis. The Housing Management and Procurement Officer keeps records of the locations and types of fire extinguishers and this is reviewed at the December meeting.

Fire Extinguishers are serviced annually and in dwellings where fire extinguishers are fitted, fire blankets are inspected, by contract with copies of pass certificates kept on file at the Unipol office.

In properties where fire extinguishers are not fitted, fire blanket installations are inspected annually by Housing Management Officers. All fire blankets which have tamper tags removed or appear damaged in any way are exchanged immediately. Exchanged Fire Blankets are returned to Unipol and are visually inspected to ensure that the blanket is undamaged by fire or storage. If the blanket has been damaged it is discarded, if not, it is refolded, a new tamper tag fitted and reused. Housing Management Officers record that this inspection has taken place on the

2. **Layout/Fire Integrity**

All Unipol properties are designed or converted to ensure that the layout and fire integrity of the building is coordinated with the overall fire strategy of the property. The basis of these strategies is to provide either a) a safe exit from the property in the event of a fire or b) to provide a safe refuge from fire which will maintain its integrity long enough to allow the fire to burn out or for the automatic detection system to activate so that the fire service can be called to assist.

In back to back houses where the only exit route is through the kitchen area, tenancies are only offered to single households (i.e. couples or a family, not shared student occupation). This is to reduce the risk associated with shared student occupants (see Risk Assessment). The Local Authority has a recommended kitchen layout in these areas which ensures that the cooker is located away from doors and Unipol has followed that layout.

Within houses in multiple occupation (more than two unrelated occupants), each habitable room is given a 30 minute protection. This is achieved via standard construction methods and fitting 30 minute fire doors and where smoke detection is fitted in bedrooms these are also fitted with intumescent strips and brushes or 25mm rebates (known collectively as "cold seals"). The integrity of these doors needs to meet BS476: Part 22: 1987 and the smoke sealing must meet BS476: Part 31.1.

Self closers are fitted on all kitchens and living rooms in line with LCC advice or where risk assessment or Building Regulations recommend.

Within complexes, due to the larger number of occupants, additional fire protection is provided. The integrity of each individual flat unit is for 1 or 2 hours. This compartmental approach includes protecting all ductwork which rises through the building so that fire and smoke cannot spread between floors.

Where the primary means of escape is through a kitchen a secondary means of escape are provided through escape windows. If escape windows cannot be fitted then additional protection including sprinkler systems are utilised.

3. **Fire Detection Systems**

All Unipol dwellings are covered by a minimum of a mains wired fire detection system to BS5839: 1988. The type of detection system provided depends upon the type, occupant type and layout of the property. Standards in Appendix B generally apply. Some example systems are described below but exact systems may differ from property to property:

Individual Properties (up to 4 individual tenants)

Where up to a maximum of four tenants share an individual property (i.e. with own front door and not part of a building sub-divided into separate dwellings) a minimum standard would be to BS5839 as an LD3 grade D type system. This is an interlinked single zone mains wired system with battery back up. This would typically feature heat detection to the kitchen and smoke detectors to all circulation areas and living room. Cellar rooms and sub divisions caused by structural bulkheads are also protected individually.

Individual Properties (5-6 individual tenants)

Where up to a maximum of four tenants share an individual property (i.e. with own front door and not part of a building sub-divided into separate dwellings) a minimum standard would be to BS5839 as an LD2 grade D type system. This is an interlinked single zone mains wired system with battery back up. This would typically feature heat detection to the kitchen and smoke detectors to all circulation areas, bedrooms and living room. Cellar rooms and sub divisions caused by structural bulkheads are also protected individually.

Flats or Bedsits in Sub-divided building where bedroom doors are not key lockable

BS5839 LD2 Grade A alarm system are deployed. Typically this would feature smoke detection to all communal circulation areas and main areas of individual flats with heat detectors to kitchens. All detectors are interlinked and wired back to a monitoring panel by the building front door (for easy access to the Fire Service if required). Activations logged on this system show which area of the building the activation took place.

All Properties with Key Lockable Bedroom Doors

A BS5839 LD2 Grade A type system is used. This incorporates smoke detection to all common circulation areas, all flat circulation areas, all habitable rooms within flats and heat detection to kitchens. The detectors are interlinked and wired back to a monitoring panel by the building entrance. Activations on this system show which area of the building the activation took place.

High sensitivity smoke detectors are used which only activate when they detect the products of a fire (not cigarette smoke, burnt toast etc). This reduces the number of false alarms.

Wherever possible, Unipol strives to ensure that fire systems are as individual to a dwelling as possible. This increased sense of tenant ownership greatly decreases the occurrence of false alarms and engenders a more responsible attitude to fire safety. Successful ways of achieving this individualisation include:

- where a fire system is shared in a sub-divided building, a detector activation only triggers the alarms within that dwelling for a set period (agreed and prescribed by the fire authority). This allows the individual tenants the opportunity to reset the fire system in the event of a false alarm. If the alarm is real the system will 'cascade' or 'step' to adjacent units so evacuation can take place.
- where possible manual call points ('break glasses') are moved to final exit points within individual dwellings rather than in communal areas. This massively reduces malicious false alarms.
- in new developments, systems are individualised as much as possible, often with separate mini monitoring panels being installed within individual dwellings. These are then monitored by an overall central monitoring station (in order to check for faults, malicious activations etc) Although this installation type is much more expensive than the minimum statutory requirement it provides the added benefits of individualisation and responsibility for fire safety within dwellings but with an over arching, non-invasive monitoring facility for Unipol.

4. Testing Regime

All properties have their fire systems tested annually to comply with BS 5839: 1988. This involves testing every detector, battery back ups and the general functioning of the system at least once a year. There is a rolling contract for each complex which is only cancelled or altered following instructions from Unipol (i.e. the obligation is on the contractor to carry out the testing each year rather than on Unipol to request the test annually) A record system is administered by the delegated member of staff to ensure that all servicing contracts are honoured and that any new properties are added to the contract. The testing regime is as follows:

Shared Student Flat Complexes

Fire systems are tested either quarterly or twice-yearly (depending on the size of the complex). The results are logged in test certificates which are filed at the Unipol office. The contractor is a specialist fire engineer.

In addition, a manual test of the call points is carried out weekly by Housing Management Staff to ensure that the system is working correctly. This also allows in house staff to check that the control panels are not showing any faults which may have occurred since the previous contract testing but which have not been reported by tenants. The results are logged at the Unipol office and checked by the designated member of staff. A system to notify the designated member of staff and log tests electronically through the use of text messages will be put into place by 31 December 2009. This will enable test results to be logged on computer and copied to record books quickly and will add to not replace the current system of test log books.

Sub-Divided Buildings

Fire systems are tested twice yearly by a specialist fire engineer. This is a higher level of servicing than for stand alone properties as the fire system is shared between dwellings so presents a slightly higher risk. The results are logged in test certificates which are filed at the Unipol office. The contractor is a specialist fire engineer.

Stand Alone Properties with Dedicated Fire Detection Systems

These properties are serviced one a year, preferably at the same time as the fire fighting equipment and burglar alarms (where present). The results are logged in test certificates which are files at the Unipol office. The contractor is a specialist fire engineer.

Additional Visual Inspections

In addition to the above, Housing Management staff carry out a number of checks during their inspections (as outlined in Property Inspections).

5. Soft Furnishings

All soft furnishings in Unipol properties meet The Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 (as amended in 1989 & 1993). This is a statutory requirement aimed at reducing the spread of fire and covers items such as mattresses, sofas, cushions, seat pads, head-boards etc.

The regulations do not apply to items brought into a property by a tenant or tenants. Where a non compliant item is discover on an inspection, a letter notifying the tenant of any potential danger is sent and a recommendation is made that the item be removed from the dwelling.

6. Tenant Education

Every tenant receives information regarding fire safety in their building in the following ways:

Health & Safety Publication/Tenant Handbook

General advice about Health & Safety matters including fire safety is included within the student friendly leaflet provided when tenants collect keys.

Complexes

Every shared student housing complex has the fire instructions attached to every bedroom and kitchen notice board. These include clear instructions on what to do if the fire alarm sounds and how to react if a fire is discovered.

Fire Alarm Instructions

Every property which is fitted with a fire detection system incorporating a control panel has the basic instructions for operating the panel permanently displayed next to it. This allows tenants to interpret the information being provided and to react appropriately following a simple checklist. The presence of these are checked at inspection.

7. Pro-Active Design

In new developments, wherever possible, soft lighting circuits are designed into the living areas to provide an alternative to room lighting. This helps reduce the number of candles used in these areas and so reduces fire risk.

Good Practice

Unipol has also undertaken a number of exercises to further promote good practice within the property portfolio. These include:

1. **Handrails**
All internal staircases have handrails fitted adjacent to flights so that there is a reduced risk of falling down stairs.
To external steps, where a high risk of fall has been identified by the Risk Assessment, properties are fitted with sturdy handrails to minimise this risk.
2. **Safety Chains to Gas Cookers**
All cookers are fitted with safety chains to the rear. This helps prevent any gas supply pipe becoming detached from its source and also stops the cooker falling fully over onto the user in the event of an instability problem.
3. **Kitchen Layouts**
All kitchens have work surfaces either side of the cooker. This reduces risk by offering protection to pan handles from being knocked and by providing a surface to quickly place items down to prevent burning.
4. **Independent Risk Assessment**
All properties are risk assessed by a qualified independent assessor every five years. The results are reported and issues raised are acted upon.
5. **Education**
Unipol produces a student friendly Health & Safety booklet which details information regarding personal safety, safe use of mobile phones, fire safety, gas safety, electrical safety, security and sensible alcohol consumption.

Every tenant living at a Unipol flat complex is invited to a social event at the start of the academic year where the main points from the Health & Safety booklet are explained by a member of Unipol staff. Tenants are also invited to raise any queries or concerns at these events.

All safety systems are checked and serviced regularly and the verification documentation filed at the Unipol office. Tenants (and their parents) are encouraged to raise any safety concerns with their Housing Management officers who will gladly explain and answer queries about the systems.

6. **Play Areas**
Unipol currently manages two play areas for children, one at Woodsley Terrace and one at Argie Avenue. The safe installation and operation of these play areas is achieved in the following way:

Installation Risk Assessment

All play areas are designed and installed by Association of Play Industries (API) contractors. A designer's risk assessment is carried out and all equipment is covered by and installed to EN1176 & EN1177. The manufacturer's play equipment is covered by a BSI Kite mark Licence.

Regular Inspections of Equipment

In order to ensure the ongoing safe use of the equipment a regular system of checking takes place. This includes:

- an annual check by an API or NPFA approved contractor in accordance with EN1176 Part 1. Copies of the pass certificates kept on file at Unipol office.
- a twice yearly (to coincide with general inspections) visual check of the equipment by Housing Management staff. Copies of the inspection sheets are filed in the Unipol office and any action required to be ordered via the standard repairs procedure.

7. Legionnaires' Disease

Grayson Heights and Mill Street are Unipol's only properties with centralised water facilities (Cold only), Unipol has existing contracts with a maintenance service to undertake the necessary servicing and cleaning of the water system as stipulated in the Health and Safety Manuals provided for the building by the developers.

Wherever there are tanked water systems it is necessary to take steps to ensure that water is not left standing in parts of the system for any substantial period of time (e.g. in showers and taps of empty rooms)

Water is run on all hot and cold outlets in any flats which have been empty for a month or more which flushes any stale water through. This is undertaken at Grayson Heights and Mill Street on a monthly basis and records are kept of where this has taken place on site and copies kept at the Unipol Office.

The Health and Safety Executive publish an Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance "Legionnaires' Disease: The control of legionella bacteria in water systems". The main part of the ACOP is a requirement to carry out a risk assessment to identify and assess potential sources of exposure to Legionella. This covers all properties, whether large or small. Although the generally high throughput and relatively low volume of water held in smaller water systems reduces the likelihood of the bacteria reaching dangerous concentrations a risk assessment must be carried out. The risk assessments should be reviewed periodically to ensure that any changes to water systems and usage of buildings are taken into account.

As stated above the Grayson Heights and Mill Street developments have stored and pumped cold water. These systems are higher risk than all other developments and Unipol undertook third party risk assessments of these Water systems in December 2007. All significant items noted in those reports for rectification have been actioned. These included: labelling of calorifiers, fitting thermometers to calorifiers and training of the Projects Co-ordinator.

All other water systems in Unipol properties are domestic type systems with a very low risk. According to the HHSRS V2 the average risk in all domestic dwellings is 1 in 1,423,649 with a very low harm outcome. This is very low compared to fire, for example, which has a risk of 1 in 4,760 with a much higher harm outcome.

Any property which has been empty for a month or more with a domestic water system should have water run on all hot and cold outlets before re-occupation to flush any stale water through. Any properties (mainly managed) fitted with 'Jacuzzi' type baths should have these cleaned quarterly or replaced with a non-'Jacuzzi' type bath

St Marks Court is a managed property with stored hot water and as described above holds a higher risk of Legionnaires disease - as this is a managed property it is the owner's responsibility to assess and address this risk and they have been advised as such.

Property Inspections

Unipol carries out full property inspections twice a year in shared student accommodation and once a year in those properties housing students with dependants (although this will be more often if problems are found). The inspection routine checks the property, maintains a proper Health & Safety regime and monitors tenant behaviour. Inspections are notified and not intrusive. They form an important part of being a Unipol tenant.

Tenants are given advance notice of the inspection and invited to be present. A list of what will be checked and what standard will be expected is included within the appointment letter.

For students with dependants the term "inspection" is not used and is replaced by the term "review". The review also looks at levels of occupancy within the property and checks that the property is being used by the tenant group and is not being sub let or used for more occupants than intended. In Housing Association related schemes maximum levels of occupancy are specified as part of the grant regime.

A record of the inspection is kept and a feedback form passed to the tenants. Any observations noted during the inspection are acted upon.

As well as an overall overview of the way that the property is being treated and how this may impact on various Health & Safety factors, more specific checks are carried out which are recorded on the inspection sheets. These include questions relating to:

- Fire extinguishers/blankets
- fire doors
- overloading of electrical outlets
- trailing wires and trip hazards
- fire alarm panel

The answers to these questions provide an additional raft of information on top of the annual service information to ensure that the Health & Safety systems within the property are working correctly, they are not being mal-treated and that the tenants understand fully how they work.

Housing Act 2004 - Risk Based Assessment and Licensing

Background

The Housing Act 2004 came into force on 6 April 2006.

Housing Act 2004 Part I

Part I of the Act deals with the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) which consists of a risk-based assessment and an inspection of a property by an environmental health officer. The officer rates 29 areas of risk and scores them. If the score is above a certain numerical point then a Category 1 hazard exists and this needs rectifying and the Local Authority can take enforcement action if this action is not taken.

The HHSRS applies to all houses, except Local Authority stock, and this includes owner occupied houses and all private rented housing (whether an HMO or licensed or not).

The link between the HHSRS and licensing (Part II of the Act) is that if an HMO requires licensing then it is likely to be inspected under the HHSRS within the five years of the licence being granted.

Although the formal HHSRS inspection will be undertaken by the Local Authority for licensed properties, it is the owner's responsibility to ensure any property meets these standards.

Housing Act 2004 Part II

Part II of the Act defines an HMO and also defines what properties need licensing. In brief, in the student area, any house that is shared by 3 or more unrelated students will be an HMO. This, in itself, has very few implications for owners.

If a house is an HMO and is on three or more floors (each floor being habitable) and is shared by five or more unrelated students then it is licensable. The licence will last for 5 years, after which a new licence will need to be applied for.

If a property is licensable there are a number of consequences, but the main ones relate to a set of amenity standards that are to be found in a number of Statutory Instruments under Part II of the Act. These are in addition to any risks identified under the HHSRS.

For properties with seven students, these standards are very similar to the old HMO standards (now repealed) and all larger houses are likely to already meet with the Part II standards if they have already been converted to previous HMO standards which is likely.

Most Student Houses that are licensable will be 5 & 6 bed properties

Risk Based Assessment

Unipol commenced the risk assessment of its properties in 1999 and since that time has had all properties in the portfolio assessed by an independent assessor. Any new properties entering the portfolio are assessed within the first year of management. This assessment takes into account all different types of risk within a property and provides an overall score for that property. This allows properties across the whole portfolio to be compared and a 'league table' of priorities to be formed.

In December 2005 previous risk assessments were converted to HHSRS V2 scores (as implemented by Part I of the Housing Act 2004).

Risk Assessment Methodology

- 29 different types of 'Risk Category' are identified (e.g. Fire Safety)
- Within this category individual hazards to be checked are identified (e.g. location and types of detectors, fire doors, protected landings and stair cases). Each of these is attributed a high, medium or low risk rating depending on the severity of harm that an incident of that hazard could produce for the most vulnerable group (as defined by the HHSRS V2 system).
- In addition to individual risk categories, properties are also scored on the number of occupants and number of storeys.
- An overall risk rating is given being the highest single score across the 29 categories.

As an example, a six bedroom property over three storeys with faulty fire doors would score very highly as the risk would be high. If the fire door was faulty in a one bedroom flat, the risk would be much lower.

Issues resulting from Risk Assessment

1. Type 1 Back to Back Fire Risk

Due to the layout of these properties, exit is always via the kitchen area. This inherently high risk procedure caused a high risk rating. Although not a type I back to back 15 Highbury Place also features exit from the upper floors via the kitchen and so exhibits similar risk.

Action Following Survey

In order to mitigate the risk in these properties, this type of back to back is let only to single households, not as shared student accommodation.

2. External Handrails

The survey highlighted a number of properties where external steps were exposed and had no protection from falls given by handrails. The highest risk scores were evident where large flights in high occupancy housing existed.

Action Following Survey

All properties highlighted with potential risk from falls have had galvanised steel handrails fitted. In addition, Unipol has undertaken surveys of properties not already identified and fitted external handrails where there are more than four consecutive external steps outside property front doors.

3. Emergency Lighting

The lack of emergency lighting within dispersed properties was consistently highlighted as a risk (all be it a low scoring risk generally).

Action Following Survey

New wiring recommendations which mean small locally positioned emergency lighting units can be wired directly off lighting circuits means that the process of retrofitting emergency lighting is made much simpler. The Unipol Code now requires emergency lighting near the distribution board if in the cellar

4. HMO Legislation

Consistently through the report, the assessor has described any shared student house as a House In Multiple Occupation. Due to this definition, many properties have scored a higher risk than they would have done if defined as a shared house.

5. Re-Scoring After Surveys

Where properties have scored highly in the risk assessment surveys, or where individual problems with properties have been identified, remedial works have been carried out.

These properties were re-scored under the previous assessment by Unipol.

6. Procedure for Re-Surveying Properties after Initial Survey

It is clear that high scoring (higher risk) properties should be tested more frequently and the low scoring properties (low risk) surveyed less frequently.

Any property which scored over 1000 points (Band A-C, Class I hazard) should be re-tested within three years (allowing for any improvement works raised during the initial survey to be implemented

and re-assessed). The remainder of the portfolio will be surveyed at least once every five years. Retests are phased so not all the portfolio needs to be retested at the same time.

At the time of writing only two properties score over 750 points and these are recent managed properties. The issues in all cases is in connection with falls on stairs and require handrails to be fitted.

7. Properties Awaiting New Leases From Leeds City Council

In the case of properties awaiting renewal of their leases from Leeds City Council, Unipol will continue to fulfil its statutory duties. These relate to Category I hazards, fire containment and detection systems and gas safety inspections. Other aspects of this policy, especially where improvements are necessarily will not apply.

8. Housing Disabled Students

It is acknowledged that disabled students are at higher risk from a number of hazards most notably with regard to the risk from fire. Occupancy types are taken into account when a building is developed and risks assessed accordingly.

Insurance Cover

Unipol properties are covered by the following policies:

1. Employers Liability Insurance
2. Public Liability Insurance
3. Directors and Officers Liability Insurance
4. Buildings and Contents cover

In addition the following complexes are covered for alternative accommodation in the event that they cannot be used:

Alexander Court
New York Street
Royal Park Flats
Mill Street
Cardigan Road Flats
Shay Street/Holborn Terrace
Woodsley Terrace/Mount Preston Street
Argie Avenue
Carlton Hill
Grayson Heights

APPENDIX A – Schedule of Back to Back Properties to be Let Only To Single Households

1. 18 Autumn Street
2. 19 Autumn Place
3. 19 Kelsall Avenue
4. 20 Kelsall Place
5. 15 Highbury Place

APPENDIX B – Leeds City Council and West Yorkshire Fire Safety Guidelines

[http://www.leeds.gov.uk/files/Internet2007/2009/24/fire%20safety%20principles%20for%20residential%20accommodation%20\(12.03.09\)%20v2.pdf](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/files/Internet2007/2009/24/fire%20safety%20principles%20for%20residential%20accommodation%20(12.03.09)%20v2.pdf)

- Summary Chart

APPENDIX C – Unipol Health and Safety Policies and Responsibilities

Unipol has two main Health and Safety Policies, the Health and Safety Policy for Housing and the Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff. These are at the centre of the organisation's health and safety regime and detail the commitments and operational requirements in this area across the whole organisation. Overall responsibilities for both policies is under the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services who reviews those policies annually in a formal review Board. The Board of Unipol is responsible for monitoring and approving any changes to the policies and the policies will be presented to the Board annually for reaffirmation.

The lines of operational responsibility then divide into the Housing policy, under the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services and Offices and Staff Policy, under the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services.

The membership of the Review Board is, The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services (Chair), the Deputy Chief Executive, the Housing Services Manager, the Housing Manager, the Senior Projects Co-ordinator and the Housing Management and Procurement Officer. The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services has the key role within that Review Board and will convene meetings, decide agendas and report back to the Chief Executive on conclusions reached.

Health and Safety Responsibilities in Job Descriptions

Ultimate accountability for the health, safety and welfare of all members of staff at work rests with the Chief Executive; however responsibilities for Health and Safety are devolved to the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services, the Housing Manager, the Projects Co-ordinator and the Housing Management and Procurement Officer. All Senior Managers have a responsibility for the effective implementation of the Health and Safety policy and for proactive health and safety management and some other members of staff have specific responsibilities.

Relevant extracts of job descriptions:

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive of Unipol has overall responsibility for the running and development of the whole organisation, which includes certain legal responsibilities under both Company and Charity law and the Articles and Memorandum of Association which governs the Charity.

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Board for the entire day to day management of the Charity and is responsible for maintaining accountability to the trustees in policy and development matters. All members of staff at Unipol are employed jointly by Unipol and the University of Leeds and the Chief Executive has Head of Department status within the University structure and is directly responsible to the Chair of the Board.

The Chief Executive shall ensure that the Charity operates within the relevant legislation and in particular the guidelines and advice offered by the Charity Commissioners and the Charities Act 1992 and that trustees are kept up to date as to their own obligations as trustees.

The Chief Executive shall have responsibility for all staff working within Unipol and shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary matters, review, appraisal and promotions to the Group on Staff Review, as constituted with delegated powers by the Board. The Chair of the Board shall have line management responsibility for the Chief Executive's own matters.

The Chief Executive shall consult on a regular basis with the two other staff in Unipol who have their own first line responsibilities and shall oversee and co-ordinate these areas of responsibility and ensure that these senior staff are acting within the authority given them.

The Chief Executive shall have overall responsibility for maintaining and developing Unipol's own property portfolio and shall ensure that maintenance procedures and development standards are properly adhered to.

Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services

Health and Safety

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services has first line responsibilities for health and safety throughout the organisation. This is undertaken through the implementation and maintenance of two key Health and Safety Policies, the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff*. These are at the centre of the organisation's health and safety regime and detail the commitments and operational requirements (legislative, regulatory and voluntary).

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services has overall responsibilities for the formation and operation of both policies and will review those policies annually being Chair of Unipol's Health and Safety Review Board that will meet not less than three times a year with a membership of: The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services (Chair), the Deputy Chief Executive, the Housing Services Manager, the Housing Manager, the Senior Projects Co-ordinator and the Housing Management and Procurement Officer.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services has the key role within that Review Board and will convene meetings, decide agendas and report back to the Chief Executive on conclusions reached.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services will ensure that the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff* is followed in respect of all staff (with the help and assistance of the Projects Co-ordinator who hands day to day responsibilities in this area) and will establish, review and maintain whatever monitoring and verification systems are required to achieve this, ensuring that an annual external check is commissioned from consultants not less than annually in respect of Unipol's health and safety policies.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services will have first line responsibility ensuring that Unipol meets with statutory requirements in health and safety in respect of risk analysis (both within the HHSRS and the RRO) and will undertake due diligence to ensure that verification systems are being operated correctly and verification documentation is being properly produced and stored for ease of accessibility.

In the event of a major incident involving a health and safety related matter (such as fire, flood, serious accident or suicide) the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services will attend the incident if at all possible and will act as the central point of co-ordination for all health and safety-related enquiries or investigations and will manage this process to external bodies. They will also prepare an internal report on any major incident and ensure that this is provided to the Chief Executive as soon as possible after any major incident.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services will:

- liaise with the Housing Services Manager in respect of the operation of the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and react to any operational difficulties or improvements suggested
- liaise with the University of Leeds in respect of any necessary aspects of the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff*
- have take first line responsibility for liaison with the Fire and Rescue Services, either when seeking their advice or following up any incident involving them
- ensure that up to date copies of relevant health and safety policies are publicly available in the relevant sections on Unipol's website
- ensure that the housing portfolio is risk assessed (under an HHSRS process) not less than every five years, in accordance with Unipol's policy and will work with the Housing Services Manager to draw up programmes of risk assessment and ensure that all of the portfolio meets the required standards of the Local Authority under Housing Licensing and the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (eradicating all Category 1 hazards identified)
- report on any organisational impact of new legislation in the area to the Chief Executive

- ensure, in respect of new developments, that Unipol receives the Health and Safety CDM information, on time after the development has been handed over and that CDM plans are readily accessible and filed for continuous use.

Training

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services has a number of important training responsibilities including staff training in health and safety matters and ensuring that this takes place and (working with the Deputy Chief Executive who has first line responsibility for human resource matters) maintaining records are kept of what training has occurred. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring:

- that all line managers have received appropriate training in health and safety matters
- the dissemination of information on health and safety issues is taking place properly within Unipol
- that new members of Unipol, including temporary staff, volunteers and consultants on the premises, are made aware of Health and Safety policy and standards, assisted by the Projects Co-Coordinator who will deliver the training

The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, being responsible for Unipol's legal obligations in respect of data protection requirements will ensure that all staff are aware of Unipol's policies and operational procedures on data handling and data protection and that staff training is provided to ensure this.

Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services

Health and Safety

Overview

Unipol has two main Health and Safety Policies, the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff*. These are at the centre of the organisation's health and safety regime and detail the commitments and operational requirements in this area across the whole organisation. Overall responsibilities for both policies remain with the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services who will review those policies in a formal review Board which will meet not less than three times a year.

The membership of that Review Board is, The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services, the Development Manager, the Housing Manager, the Projects Co-ordinator and the Housing Management and Procurement Officer. The Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services has a key role within that Review Board and will annually review:

- all operational aspects of the Health and Safety Policy for Housing
- raise any difficulties encountered in that operation
- suggest any improvements or changes that need to be made.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services will have first line operational responsibility for the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and for ensuring that the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff* is followed in respect of all staff within the housing management team and will oversee the Housing Manager who has more detailed responsibilities in the implementation and operation of the policies and who, in turn, supervises others who have direct responsibilities for fulfilling designated tasks under the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing*.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services also has first line responsibilities in respect of the risk assessment (undertaken as part of an HHSRS five yearly rolling review) for the portfolio.

Detailed Responsibilities

The Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services will:

- oversee the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and draw to the attention of the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services any operational difficulties or improvements

- ensure that the housing management team follow the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff*
- have first line responsibility for the following key areas of Unipol's housing operations:
 - ensure that safety monitoring systems and maintaining verification documentation take place as required by the relevant policy
 - ensure housing management cover, including emergency cover, is maintained for the portfolio on a 24 hour seven day a week basis and that this system is capable of dealing with the institutions, parents, students and relevant external agencies following any serious incident
 - ensure, on taking properties into management, either from other housing suppliers or following development work overseen by the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, that all proper health and safety documentation is properly available and filed
 - maintain a set of routines to ensure that the standards within the Unipol Code and the National Code for Larger Student Developments are met and maintain a complete set of up to date documentation relating to larger developments as required as part of that Code's verification processes.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services will also:

- ensure that the housing portfolio is risk assessed (under an HHSRS process) not less than every five years, in accordance with the policy and that each risk assessment is properly filed and is readily accessible, ensuring that any missing properties are quickly inspected (through the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services) and the results acted upon
- work with the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, to draw up programmes of works and plans to ensure that all of the portfolio meets the required standards of the Local Authority under Housing Licensing and the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (eradicating all Category 1 hazards identified)
- ensure that if the RRO applies, as it does to all large buildings and to smaller houses let under single tenancy (not joint agreements) then, in the case of larger buildings, they will ensure a full risk assessment relating to fire (prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services) is kept on file and in the case of off-street properties, that a member of the housing management team complete an individual risk assessment (based on a framework document prepared by the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services) at the point that lettings commence and that a copy of that, for each relevant address, is kept on file. All RRO related risk assessments will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services through the Health and Safety Review Board
- ensure that Unipol fully complies with the law in respect of its portfolio under the Housing Act 2004, and in particular that all properties that should be licensed have a license that is current and where the conditions of any licence that have been issued are met within the timescales outlined on each licence.

Housing Manager

Health and Safety

The Housing Manager will maintain an up-to-date operational knowledge of Unipol's *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff* and ensure that the policies are both applied and followed within the housing management team. The Housing Manager will draw to the attention of the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services any operational difficulties and will recommend any improvements that could be made in either policy.

Housing

The Housing Manager will

- ensure that the health and safety operational procedures in respect of Unipol's housing portfolio are being followed by those staff within the housing management team and that proper verification documentation is available and properly filed as part of those procedures

- act as the first line of co-ordination and check the fire alarm testing logs as often as necessary to ensure that testing by Housing Management Officers is in accordance with the health and safety policy and bring any shortcomings to the attention of the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services in respect of the housing portfolio) and the Deputy Chief Executive (in respect of implications for human resources)

- ensure that the core documentation within the ANUK/Unipol Code of Standards verification files are maintained in an ordered and up-to-date manner

- work closely with the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services in respect of any issues relating to safety or safety procedures within Unipol's own property portfolio, keeping them suitably informed of any problems or developments

- ensure that housing management staff are inducted, trained and kept up to date in simple risk assessment procedures relating to the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) and know how to undertake risk assessments

- work with the Projects Co-ordinator, where hazards have been identified under the HHSRS to address and minimise those risks.

Health and Safety - Staff

The Housing Manager will

- ensure that all staffing the housing management team are complying with the relevant Unipol policies relating to health and safety
- report to the Projects Co-ordinator any concerns or issues relating to staff safety or the operation of any policy and ensure the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services is kept informed of those communications

Projects Co-ordinator

Health and Safety

The Projects Co-ordinator will:

work with the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, to review annually the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff* and the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing* and will have a high level of ownership of both policies

have first line responsibility for overseeing the operation of the *Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff* and will draw to the attention of the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services any operational difficulties that occur in administering the policy

work with The Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services, and other consultants as required, to ensure that health and safety risk assessments are made and kept up to date in an easily accessible manner in respect of Unipol's offices and its buildings

have the important task of overseeing the ongoing dissemination of information on matters raised in the health and safety policy to all staff within Unipol and for building a strong culture of health and safety awareness and compliance

maintain a working knowledge of relevant legislation.

Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff

The Projects Co-ordinator will be responsible for:

ensuring that staff receive training (including induction and refresher training), to be commissioned from others if necessary, so that staff are informed about and understand the policy, the obligations it places on them and what they must do as a result of the policy

receiving feedback and evaluation from staff that have undertaken training as a basis for improving future training methods and content

maintaining a record of staff training (in co-ordination with the Deputy Chief Executive who oversees matters relating to human resources)

ensuring that the health and safety content on Unipol's website is correct and up to date (receiving assistance from the Communications Officer in this respect who has maintains the website content and co-ordination)

ensuring that Unipol has an adequate number of staff trained in:

first aid procedures

fire wardens and fire procedures, fire testing and fire evacuation procedures

the operation of the lift and the release of persons who may be trapped in it

undertaking a programme of planned safety inspections (both general and specialist) of the offices and ensuring that auditable records of these inspections exist and that any problems or remedial actions are identified and reported to the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services for rectification

undertaking and updating the fire risk assessments for Unipol's offices (and taking external specialist advice if required)

ensuring that a risk assessment of necessary activities, processes, and use of equipment has been carried out and is readily accessible and current

ensuring a high standards of housekeeping within the offices buildings, including enforcing good practice in the storage of equipment and consumables and reporting any difficulties in this area to the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services

ensuring that adequate and suitable protective clothing and equipment is available for use by staff and visitors

operating Unipol's procedures if an accident to staff or visitors should occur including:

arranging for the prompt reporting of accidents, in accordance with Unipol and the University of Leeds procedures

investigating accidents and in the case of any serious accidents to jointly investigate these with the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services

investigating and reporting on any "near miss" incidents

reporting all significant issues arising from accidents and incidents to the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services.

In order to operate the Health and Safety Policy for Offices and Staff the Projects Co-ordinator needs take responsibility for, and fulfil, a number of specific duties including:

checking the first aid boxes regularly and keeping supplies kept up to date and ahead of their "use by" dates"

undertaking the certification of electrical appliances (including portable appliance testing), ensuring that certification is up to date and verification records are kept readily accessible at all times

ensuring that all fire extinguishers are maintained and serviced in the offices

undertaking fire alarm testing, completing fire testing logs with exactitude, ensuring fire alarms are serviced and maintaining records of that servicing, rectifying any problems experienced in fire testing and servicing.

Health and Safety Policy for Housing

The Projects Co-ordinator has certain designated responsibilities under the *Health and Safety Policy for Housing*, and is responsible for:

maintaining a comprehensive routine of HHSRS inspections, as detailed in the policy, keeping HHSRS reports up to date and working with the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services and the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services to ensure that an action plan is formed, and acted upon within a given timescale to address serious hazards identified

ensuring that Unipol fulfils its legal obligations in respect of planned and preventative maintenance servicing, negotiating with contractors and ensuring that M & E servicing contracts are set up for larger developments (in excess of 15 occupants) and that such contracts are renewed in a timely way and making recommendations, following consultation with the Housing Service Manager, as to which contracts to enter into to the Assistant Chief Executive - Technical Services

ensuring that all details of the servicing are passed to the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services who will monitor the performance of contacts and undertaking additional monitoring when requested to do by the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services

taking first line and operational responsibility for controlling any identified risk from Legionella as the nominated "responsible person" for the organisation and ensuring compliance with the Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice and Guidance (ACOP) with regard to the control of Legionella bacteria in water systems. Working with the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services to ensure the obligations of the Code are fully understood by the housing management team

Housing Management and Procurement Officer

Health and Safety

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will maintain an operational knowledge of Unipol's Health and Safety Policies and will undertake a number of important health and safety matters and routines and will draw to the attention of the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services any operational difficulties or improvements identified from those routines.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will assist the Housing Manager in respect of a number of important health and safety matters and routines. The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will, under the direction of the Housing Manager, ensure that all of Unipol's:

properties are NICEIC inspected and certificated, in line with Unipol's policies and that certificates are kept in a central Health and Safety file which is well ordered and readily accessible to all staff and tenants (on request)

gas appliances are serviced annually to CORGI standards and will co-ordinate the Housing Management Team in order to ensure that all tenants are given copies of Gas Safety Certificates on moving into a property and upon the renewal of the certificate and that certificates are kept in a central Health and Safety file which is well ordered and readily accessible to all staff

fire extinguishers, fire alarms and emergency lighting are serviced annually and that a file of relevant certificates is maintained providing proof of this which is well ordered and readily accessible to all staff

intruder alarms are serviced, as directed by the Assistant Chief Executive - Housing Services and that a file of relevant certificates is maintained providing proof of this which is well ordered and readily accessible to all staff.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will liaise with the Housing Manager in respect of any concerns or issues relating specifically to staff safety or property safety.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will ensure that other members of the Housing Management team undertakes fire alarm tests and emergency lighting tests, as required, but not less than

weekly in larger buildings (in excess of 15 occupants) and that each test is recorded appropriately in a log and that where a member of staff is absent then cover is provided by another Housing Management Officer so that the tests are carried out.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will report to the Housing Manager any member of staff who does not undertake a test at the relevant time and will ensure that, as requested, the central log of testing is available for the Housing Manager to check.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will have first line responsibility for undertaking any portable appliance testing necessary, will be trained in this area and will maintain a verifiable record of tests made. The Officer will also co-ordinate an annual visual check of all electrical appliances and shall ensure that a verifiable record of checks made is held centrally and that any remedial work needed is undertaken.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will ensure that all instruction manuals provided to tenants within dwellings are accurate and that instructions contain information about how appliances function and should be used, giving particular attention to the health and safety aspects of those instructions.

The Housing Management and Procurement Officer will, from time to time, receive additional assistance in carrying out these duties from a designated member of the housing management team and will oversee the operations of that designated member and ensure that they are following the correct procedures and systems that the Officer is responsible for.

All Staff

All staff are required to adhere and comply to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act, related Regulations and in accordance to the University's Policy on Health and Safety which can be accessed via <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/safety/usp/uspindex.htm>

In addition all staff are also required to cooperate with regard to the implementation of Health and Safety arrangements and should not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of Health, Safety and welfare at work.

Accommodation Bureau Manager - Nottingham

Human Resources

The Accommodation Bureau Manager will:

Ensure that accommodation bureau staff adhere to Health and Safety procedures.

Health and Safety Rules

The following health and safety rules are intended to protect employees at work. Health and safety rules are mandatory to all levels of employees.

All Unipol employees must:

- Report all accidents, regardless of their outcome to the Projects Co-ordinator who will record these in the accident book
- Deal with all hazards and report these to the Projects Co-ordinator.
- Wear/use the personal protective equipment provided in all designated areas or for all specified operations/tasks where the Unipol has informed them, either by signage, written information or verbally that it is necessary to protect health and safety.
- Use any safety equipment provided properly at all times.

- Maintain good housekeeping throughout their working area.
- Work in a safe and careful manner not creating risks to themselves and others.
- Follow at all times any health and safety information, instruction and training, in particular:
 - contractor signing in books
 - safe systems of work
 - safe manual handling techniques
 - safe working postures and use of display screen equipment

All Unipol employees must not:

- Create hazards to themselves and other people.
- Interfere with, or misuse, items provided for their safety.
- Obstruct fire exits, escape routes and other walkways.
- Attend work under the influence of alcohol, non-prescription drugs or any other intoxicating/narcotic substances. Any employees driving on behalf of Unipol or operating machinery whilst adversely affected by drugs or after drinking alcohol will be subject to disciplinary action.
- Smoke in any area of the premises or adjacent to the premises near entrances and windows, or permit smoking in those areas by clients, contractors or visitors.