

Fire Policy Document

A copy of the fire policy document is to be held on all wards/departments and theatres and must be available to all staff

Effective: July 2010

Review: July 2013

Trust Fire Policy Statement

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, hereafter referred to as the Trust, has a commitment to continually monitor compliance with all current fire regulations, including fire training and where necessary carry out structural improvements, update fire detection and warning systems and carry out scheduled maintenance of all fire related equipment. The Trust has a clearly defined Fire Management Structure (see Appendix 1), together with a Fire Procedure Policy and a Fire Precautions Programme agreed with the local Fire Authority for installing and satisfactorily maintaining an adequate level of physical fire precautions designed to prevent the occurrence of fire, ensure its' early detection, giving adequate warning to control and stop the spread of fire. The Trust recognises the priority of life over property.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to:

Explain the structure of the organisation and how fire safety will be managed.

Identify those personnel with specific duties and responsibilities and to indicate what those duties and responsibilities are.

Ensure that all staff are aware of their roles in ensuring a fire safe environment.

Give guidance and instruction to all members of staff.

2. Fire Hazard

Fire is a potential hazard in all NHS premises. The consequences of fire in hospitals and other healthcare premises can be especially serious because of the difficulties and dangers associated with emergency evacuation of patients, many of whom may be highly dependant. The aim therefore must be to ensure that, if possible, outbreaks of fire do not occur and that if and when they do occur, they are rapidly detected, effectively contained and quickly extinguished. This means that overall fire safety will depend on physical factors such as building design and construction, together with equipment and furnishing and also crucially on current local policies for handling emergencies and relevant staff training.

The Trust operates a [No Smoking Policy](#) through all Trust sites.

At all times the predominant consideration should be the welfare and safety of people.

3. Statutory Requirements and Guidance

The principal statutory requirements that have a direct bearing on fire safety and must be observed by NHS Hospital Trusts at all times are:

- NHS Fire Code.
- Building Regulations 2002 Approved Document B - Fire Safety.
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987.
- Health and Safety at Work Act, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.
- NHS Housing in the Community: Housing Act 1985.
- Registration of Houses in Multiple Occupancy.
- Places of Work Regulation 1992 (as amended).

4. Duties and Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this Policy and of the guidance detailed in the Department of Health "Health Technical Memorandum 05-01: Managing Healthcare Fire Safety". The Chief Executive will appoint a Fire Safety Manager to assist in the implementation of this Policy. This Officer will be of sufficient seniority/rank to be able to carry out the duties required.

4.2 Board Level Director (Nursing and Patient Services Director)

The Board Level Director is responsible for fire safety issues at Board level, including programmes of work relating to Fire Safety for consideration as part of the annual Business Plan.

4.3 Fire Safety Manager

- The Trust's designated Fire Safety Manager is the Director of Estates, whose principal duties are:
- To appoint Deputies on all Trust sites to ensure that a designated person is always available to take command of a fire emergency until the Fire Brigade arrives.
- To ensure that all staff receive clear written instructions on the actions to be taken in the event of a fire.
- To liaise with all organisations working on Trust premises to ensure that they are aware of the Trust Policy and Procedures.
- To co-ordinate and direct actions of staff in a fire emergency i.e., to establish control points, provide contact with the Fire Brigade and to ensure the safe evacuation of patients, visitors and staff.

- To liaise with the Fire Advisor for advice on developing a plan of action for dealing with a fire emergency.
- To ensure that all staff with special responsibilities in a fire emergency situation are aware of the procedure to be followed and are clear as to their role and responsibilities.
- To ensure that agreed programmes of investment in fire precautions are correctly accounted for in the Trust's annual Business Plan and prepare an Annual Fire Report for submission to the Trust Board.
- To establish a multi-disciplinary fire precautions group that will review the fire policy and procedure annually.
- To co-ordinate all fire precautions within the Trust and have a working knowledge of fire precautions and the fire alarm systems.
- To consult with the Fire Advisors and Estates Management to ensure that fire alarm systems are maintained and tested in accordance with NHS Guidance (HTM 05-03 Part B) and British Standard 5839.
- To arrange for periodic site fire safety audits.
- To investigate and remedy abuse of fire equipment.
- To co-ordinate with Managers and the Fire Advisors to ensure that all staff participates in an annual mandatory fire training programme and required fire drills and that training records are maintained.

4.4 Fire Advisor

- The Trust has statutory and other responsibilities in respect of fire safety for all its premises. As a means of fulfilling its obligation, the Trust has appointed specialist Fire Advisors. These are responsible for advising management on technical fire matters, monitoring the state of fire precautions in the Trust's premises and for arranging sufficient training sessions for all staff.
- The Fire Advisors are responsible to the Fire Safety Manager. The duties of the Fire Advisors are:
- To give advice on all fire precautions matters and to co-ordinate and monitor fire precaution arrangements.
- To liaise and consult with the Home Office Inspectorate, Statutory Fire Authorities, appropriate Building Control Officers, Health and Safety Executive, Petroleum Officer and other bodies having advisory or mandatory responsibilities over the whole range of fire precaution activities.
- To ensure the Trust's registration of premises is maintained under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 under the relevant part of the Order and ensure that a regular inspection of Trust premises takes place in

compliance with Fire Certification, Health Technical Memorandum and Workplace Regulations.

- To ensure that adequate means of escape from fire is available and that suitable and sufficient fire fighting equipment is provided and maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.
- To advise on the development, maintenance and review of fire safety policies, procedures and systems.
- To monitor the testing of fire alarms and associated equipment in accordance with current British Standards and advise Estates Management of any defects.
- In conjunction with Estates identify and provide an annual fire programme of work in priority order.
- To advise Estate Managers, Project Teams and Architects when upgrading fire alarm systems in existing premises or new buildings.
- To visit wards and departments to discuss fire safety procedures with staff.
- To prepare fire action notices, and ensure that they are displayed throughout Trust premises.
- To develop and maintain a regular general and departmental programme of training in fire safety both by day and night which will include the action required during an incident of fire evacuation drills and the maintaining of a record of all training.
- To ensure that the Fire Safety Manager, deputies and all staff involved directly are given correct instruction on their roles and responsibilities.
- To prepare reports to the Trust Board for all serious incidents.
- To, where possible, attend all fire incidents, investigate false alarms and maintain a permanent record of all fire incidents submitting monthly and annual returns to the Fire Safety Manager who will then forward the required information to the Department of Health.
- To liaise with the Estates Department to brief Contractors carrying out major works and those providing a regular contract service, who may create fire hazards, or where combustible materials may be involved (painting, woodwork). Estates Management must ensure their staff and contractors are trained to a high standard on fire prevention and use adequate safe systems at work.

4.5 Role of Estates Management

- In addition to responsibilities shared with other Managers, Trust's Estate Managers are responsible for many other factors affecting fire prevention and fire protection. These include:
- Consulting with the Management Team, Building Control, Fire Advisors and the Fire Brigade on any proposals to construct new premises, upgrade existing buildings and/or equipment in order to maintain fire safety standards in accordance with legislation and standards as contained in FIRE CODE - Directory of Documents.
- The maintenance and testing of all fixed and portable fire alarm systems and fixed fire fighting equipment in accordance with current British Standards. The Estates Department will also be responsible for keeping up-to-date all relevant maintenance and testing documentation.
- This equipment will include:
 - Automatic Fire Alarm Systems Fire Blankets
 - Fire Hydrants and Mains Hose Reels
 - Fixed CO2/ Drenching Installation Dry and Wet Rising Mains
- Maintenance of Trust premises which should include fire resistance ratings of structures, rate of surface spread of flame, especially on routes of escape, compartmentation to allow safe progressive horizontal evacuation of patient areas.
- As a number of staff (direct labour/contractors) are engaged in the type of work (hot work) that may create fire hazards, or where combustible materials may be involved (painting, woodwork), Estates Management must ensure that their staff and contractors are trained to a high standard in fire prevention and use suitable and sufficient safe systems of work. This must include the issue of hot work permits when necessary.
- In the event of a fire occurring (or a fire alarm) Estates staff will be actively involved in the Fire Procedures, their knowledge and expertise of:
 - Buildings
 - Electrical installations and equipment
 - Machinery
 - Lifts
 - Mains services
 - Fire Alarm Systems
 - Fixed/portable fire fighting equipment

is of importance to the Fire Safety Manager/Deputy and the Fire Service.

- The Estates Department will maintain up-to-date fire plans of all premises and these should be made available in any emergency situation. These plans

must be readily available and held in areas easily accessible such as telephone exchange or reception areas.

- In the event of a Fire Alarm or incident, the Estates Manager will ensure that Estates staff attend to render any help or technical assistance.

4.6 Senior Staff

All Senior Staff members are responsible for:

- The monitoring of the fire safety within their respective departments.
- Ensuring that new staff on their first day of service is given basic familiarisation training that should include fire procedure, means of escape, location of fire fighting equipment and designated assembly points.
- Ensuring that fire safety instructions are brought to the attention of their own staff and that every member of staff participates in mandatory fire precautions training and ensure training records are kept.
- Implementing the Trust No Smoking Policy.
- Ensuring all textiles and furniture for use in patient areas conform to the current Fire Code, Health Technical Memorandum and current British Standard Specifications. Advice must be sought from NHS Supplies.
- Ensuring good house keeping measures are implemented and maintained.
- Complying with any other policies required by the Trust Board.

4.7 Staff Responsibilities

- All personnel in the Trust have duties and responsibilities in respect of fire safety and are responsible for ensuring that:
- They understand the character of fire, smoke and toxic fumes and are aware of and report the fire hazards within their working environment.
- They practice and promote good fire precaution measures.
- They understand and follow the action to be taken in the event of an outbreak of fire.
- They attend fire training and participate in fire drills at least once per year.
- Management is informed of any instances where correct procedures are not being implemented.

5. Arson - Preventing and Dealing with Arson

5.1 Introduction

- Arson, the deliberate starting of fires, can occur in hospitals as well as other health care premises. Arson should be considered preventable, if not in its entirety then to a degree where all possible steps have been taken to minimise the threat.
- Deliberate fire raising can not only damage buildings, property and cause disruption to the health care provided by the Trust, but it can also cause loss of life.
- A significant proportion of fires deliberately started in hospitals can occur where a psychiatric area is provided but other types of hospital are not immune.

5.2 Reasons for Arson

A number of reasons can account for the deliberate starting of a fire. These include:

- A mentally disturbed person.
- Revenge from a member of staff who has been disciplined, dismissed or faces unemployment.
- A member of staff destroying evidence of internal fraud or theft.
- A criminal, destroying evidence.
- A relative blaming the hospital for the death of a family member.
- Inadequately supervised children.
- Economic or political objectives, e.g. terrorist acts or sabotage.
- Vandalism (often associated with alcohol or drugs).

5.3 Management Strategy

- Management's plan for dealing with arson is considered in the context of fire safety guidance e.g., Health Technical Memoranda and Fire Practice Notes as well as Security Procedures. The presence of an Arson Policy helps to ensure that the safety of patients, staff and visitors is maintained.
- In order to reduce the risk of arson all senior staff members will routinely carry out risk assessments within their areas of responsibility and will include:
 - Risk from patients.
 - Availability of flammable materials and accelerants.

- Good housekeeping policy in the handling of rubbish, linen and storage areas.
- Staff selection also plays an important role in the prevention of arson attacks. Evidence from attacks in NHS premises shows that some arsonists are, or have been members of staff. In accordance with the Trust's [Security Policy](#) (pre-employment screening), staff will be vetted by enquiring into the past history of any applicant and where appropriate under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemptions Order 1975) and the Children and Young Persons Act 1989
- New staff, temporary staff and contractors should be under regular surveillance and supervision especially in isolated or high-risk areas.

5.4 Security Measures

- Healthcare facilities can be very vulnerable, due to the diverse groups of people that they deal with on a daily and regular basis. Security measures therefore need to take into account a number of issues that will assist in the prevention of arson:
 - The number of access/egress points into the building.
 - Access to plant rooms, ducts and service areas.
 - CCTV surveillance.
 - Intruder Alarm detection.
 - Measures for the control of keys and ID cards (Security Policy).
- The security of the premises with regard to fire safety should be assessed to take account of these circumstances. Premises housing animal or research facilities are known targets for arsonists and protest groups and require particular attention
- It is the responsibility of the Trust to ensure that Security staff and Trust personnel receive training in respect of security procedures relating to a possible arson attack
- Staff must report any suspicious person/s, or incident as follows:
 - RVI Site - telephone Extension 333 (Telephone Exchange).
 - Freeman Site - telephone Extension 333 (Telephone Exchange).
 - Campus for Ageing and Vitality Site - telephone Extension 333 (Telephone Exchange).
 - Walkergate Site - telephone 9-999 Local Police. Staff must also inform Porter/Security via telephone Extension 4324/4325, or Bleep 3199, or by radio.
 - Other locations as detailed in relevant Security Policy
 - The recipient of the call will then take appropriate action.
- Frequent but irregularly timed patrols, where appropriate, will be undertaken by Security staff, both during and outside of normal working hours, to vulnerable parts of the premises. This will help to deter arsonists.

6. Fire Precaution Measures

- 6.1 It is the duty of every member of staff to report to Management any instances where proper procedures are not being implemented, e.g. fire doors wedged open, escape routes blocked by furniture or accumulation of rubbish, hazardous or flammable materials adjacent to escape routes, faulty electrical equipment and gas appliances.
- 6.2 Among the most important aspects of fire prevention in hospitals are the obvious dangers from smoking (all Trust sites are no smoking areas as per Trust [No Smoking Policy](#)), the massive amount of electrical equipment, the possibility of deliberate fire-raising and the need for a range of good housekeeping measures.
- 6.3 Where fire alarm and detection systems are installed in premises within the Trust, they operate either manually via a break glass call point or automatically through smoke or heat detection.
- 6.4 The responsibility for ensuring maintenance and testing of the fire warning system rests with the designated Fire Safety Manager/Deputy for the appropriate site, and will be carried out in accordance with Health Technical Memorandum 05-03 Part B and British Standard 5839.
- 6.5 All private contractors must ensure that fire safety instructions are brought to the attention of their own staff and that every member of staff participates in fire precautions training and standards as contained within the Construction Design and Management Regulations.
- 6.6 It is the responsibility of the contractor's management to liaise with the Estates Department and Fire Advisors to arrange training sessions and hot work permits where necessary.
- 6.7 The Fire Safety Manager will ensure that telephone operators have written instructions detailing the action to be taken by them in case of fire emergencies
- 6.8 Action in case of fire notices shall be prepared by the Fire Advisors for all Trust premises.
- 6.9 Non-scheduled testing of alarms must not be carried out without first informing the Fire Advisors. In addition, the Fire Advisors should be informed of any faults in the alarm equipment or of any repairs being currently undertaken to the same. Maintenance and testing of the system will be in accordance with the current British Standard and HTM 05-03 Part B. A copy of the permit to Work should be provided for the Fire Safety Manager.
- 6.10 All textiles and furniture for use in patient areas should conform to current Fire Code, Health Technical Memorandum 05-03 Part C and current relevant British Standard Specifications.
- 6.11 All new patient areas created within existing hospitals and those with new extensions and major alterations/upgrading must be equipped at their commissioning stage with textiles and furnishings in accordance with the previously mentioned standards.

- 6.12 In existing health buildings every effort should be made to ensure that textiles and furniture conform to Fire Code, Health Technical Memorandum 05-03 Part C and British Standards Specifications.
- 6.13 Controls should be exercised over patients clothing available through hospital shops to ensure compliance with current standards. Staff who may accompany patients on shopping trips or who are in contact with relatives about brought in clothing, furniture or furnishings will have to be vigilant.
- 6.14 Before furniture or fittings are purchased, advice should be sought from either the Supplies Department or the Fire Advisors to ensure that they conform to current standards.

7. Fire Policy

To achieve a planned and controlled response to any fire emergency, to minimise risks to patients, visitors and staff, the Trust will prepare detailed fire plans. In hospital, the above will take the form of the Health and Safety Manual that will be issued to Departmental Heads (see [Fire Procedure](#) document).

The Trust will ensure that the appropriate fire action notices are prepared and displayed adjacent to all break glass fire alarm points. Such notices should be in accordance with the current British Standard (see [Fire Procedure](#) document).

All staff will receive a staff Health & Safety handbook containing fire prevention/procedure guidelines on joining the Trust.

The Trust will provide an organisational chart of officers and staff involved in fire protection (see Appendix 1).

8. Fire Drawings

Fire drawings of all premises on site showing fire compartment walls, water supplies, fire alarm systems, fire extinguishing equipment, lighting systems and fire signs and notices should be prepared and updated by the Estates Department and made available for use by the Fire Brigade. One set will be retained by Switchboard Supervisors, or other designated areas such as reception areas.

9. Fire Drills

Practice fire drills will be held at least twice yearly in hospitals (1 day and 1 night) and at least once a year, but preferably twice a year in other health service premises. Responsibility for arranging such drills rest with the Fire Advisor who will agree details with the Fire Safety Manager and the respective Head of Department. The drill will take the form of an evacuation or simulated evacuation of ward, department, floor or building, depending upon individual circumstances.

Where possible the Fire Advisor will liaise with the local Fire Authorities and encourage joint participation in fire drills.

10. Reporting Of Fires

In the event of fire, the agreed fire procedures for raising the alarm and contacting the Fire Service and key personnel will be followed. As soon as possible after the event a written report of the incident, will be made by the Fire Safety Manager/Deputy, or Head of Department (depending upon circumstances) and submitted to the Fire Advisors, using the Trust's incident reporting form.

The Fire Advisors will be responsible for preparing fire reports for submission to the Chief Executive and NHS Estates.

The Fire Advisors/Fire Safety Manager, will advise the Chief Executive when it is necessary to inform NHS Estates of any fire incident, as detailed and in compliance with Fire Code, Policy and Principles.

The Fire Advisor, working in conjunction with Officers of the Local Fire Authority, will investigate and report to the Chief Executive on the suspected cause of fires originating in the Trust premises and measures to prevent future occurrences.

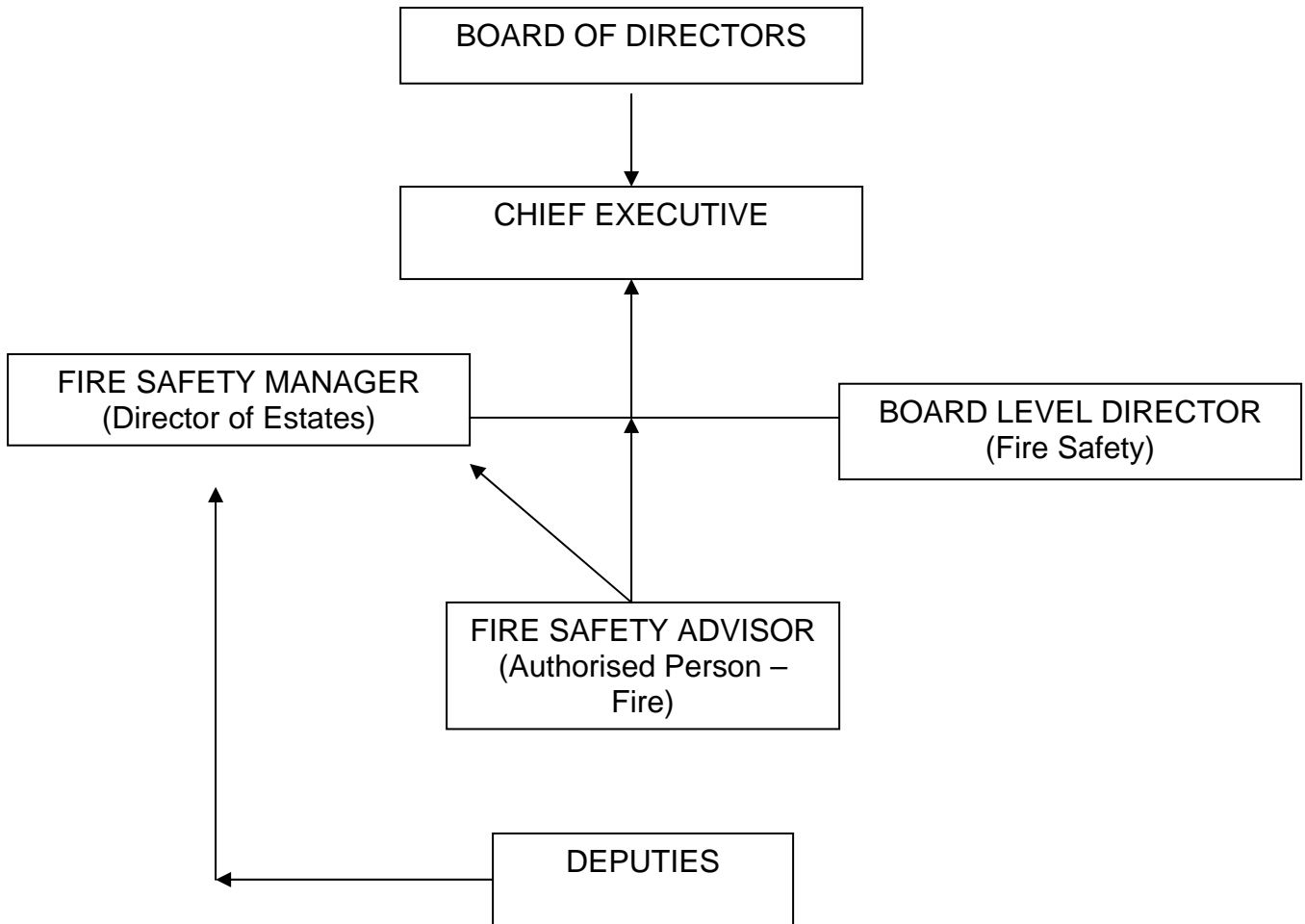
11. Residences

All residents who occupy accommodation within the Trust must be informed of the fire precaution measures relating to their own particular block or home and any abuse of the regulations may subject them to disciplinary action and termination of accommodation tenancy.

12. Monitoring

The Fire Policy will be determined, monitored, evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis by the Trust Health and Safety Committee.

FIRE PROTECTION - MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SCREENING FORM A

This form must be completed and attached to any procedural document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title:	Fire Policy	Policy Author:	Hugh Macleod
		Yes/No?	You must provide evidence to support your response:
1.	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of the following: (* denotes protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010)		This policy does not discriminate against any group more or less favourably than another on the basis of race, ethnic origin, nationality, gender, culture, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or disability.
	• Race *	no	
	• Ethnic origins (including gypsies and travellers)	no	
	• Nationality	no	
	• Gender *	no	
	• Culture	no	
	• Religion or belief *	no	
	• Sexual orientation including lesbian, gay and bisexual people *	no	
	• Age *	no	
	• Disability – learning difficulties, physical disability, sensory impairment and mental health problems *	no	
	• Gender reassignment *	no	
	• Marriage and civil partnership *	no	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	no	
3.	If you have identified potential discrimination which can include associative discrimination i.e. direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
4(a).	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative? (If “yes”, please answer sections 4(b) to 4(d)).	no	
4(b).	If so can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
4(c).	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
4(d).	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	

Comments:	Action Plan due (or Not Applicable):
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Name and Designation of Person responsible for completion of this form: Hugh Macleod Trust Lead Fire Advisor Date: ... 20 October 2010
Names & Designations of those involved in the impact assessment screening process: Hugh Macleod Trust Lead Fire Advisor

(If any reader of this procedural document identifies a potential discriminatory impact that has not been identified on this form, please refer to the Policy Author identified above, together with any suggestions for the actions required to avoid/reduce this impact.)