



Legionella Policy

Version: 2025.1

Review Date: July 2026

Approved By: Board

Applies To: All staff, contractors, service users, and properties managed by Aves Housing

1. Purpose

This policy outlines Aves Housing's commitment to maintaining safe, healthy environments across all workplace offices and supported housing schemes. It ensures compliance with relevant legislation and provides a framework for managing health and safety risks, including the control of Legionella bacteria in water systems.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All communal and individual premises managed by Aves Housing
- All staff, contractors, and service users
- All systems and activities that may impact health and safety, including water systems and general maintenance

3. Legal Frameworks

Aves Housing complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- HSE Approved Code of Practice L8: *Legionnaires' disease – The control of Legionella bacteria in water systems*
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

4. Definitions & Glossary

- **Legionella:** A type of bacteria that can cause Legionnaires' disease, a serious lung infection.
- **Flushing:** Running water through outlets to prevent stagnation.
- **Descaling:** Removing mineral buildup from taps and showerheads.
- **Vulnerable Individuals:** Residents with limited mobility, cognitive impairments, or health conditions that increase risk.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Management Team	Strategic oversight; appoint competent persons; ensure policy review and compliance
Health & Safety Lead	Policy implementation; incident investigation; training coordination
Housing & Maintenance Teams	Conduct routine checks; maintain records; implement control measures
Support Workers / Housing Officers	Monitor resident safety; report issues; support vulnerable individuals
Contractors	Comply with safety protocols; provide training certification; report hazards

5. Risk Management Process

Aves Housing uses a proactive approach to risk management:

- Regular risk assessments across all properties
- Legionella risk assessments every 2 years or sooner if occupancy/system changes occur
- Identification of hazards, vulnerable individuals, and control gaps
- Implementation of corrective actions and monitoring plans
- Emergency response protocols in case Legionella is detected (e.g., isolate systems, notify residents, escalate to environmental health)

6. Maintenance Standards

All maintenance activities must:

- Comply with relevant safety standards
- Be carried out by qualified personnel
- Be documented and reviewed

- Include preventative measures to reduce risk (e.g., insulation, descaling, flushing)
- Be tracked using performance indicators (e.g., % of outlets flushed weekly, audit pass rates)

7. Legionella & Water Hygiene

Control Measures:

- Hot water stored at $\geq 60^{\circ}\text{C}$
- Cold water maintained at $\leq 20^{\circ}\text{C}$
- Weekly flushing of outlets not in daily use
- Descaling of taps and showerheads every 3 months
- Removal of unused pipework
- Insulation of water systems
- Covered and clean water tanks

Supported Housing Specifics:

- Staff monitor water outlet usage for residents with limited mobility or cognition
- Assist residents in running taps and showers weekly
- Provide accessible guidance on water hygiene
- Escalate concerns immediately to maintenance teams

9. Safeguarding & Resident Welfare

- Risk assessments consider individual vulnerabilities
- Staff trained to identify and respond to health and safety concerns
- Residents supported in maintaining safe living environments
- Concerns escalated promptly to relevant teams
- External escalation pathways available (e.g., local authority, environmental health)

10. Training & Competence

- All staff receive annual training on:
 - General health and safety
 - Legionella awareness
- Water system contractors must provide evidence of:
 - Legionella training
 - Health and safety competence
- Training records maintained and reviewed annually
 - Maintained and reviewed annually
 - Available in accessible formats and languages where needed

11. Monitoring, Auditing & Record Keeping

- All assessments, checks, and maintenance actions recorded
- Legionella records retained for 5 years
- Digital logs stored securely and reviewed quarterly
- Internal audits conducted annually
- KPIs tracked and reported to the Management Team

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually by the Health & Safety Lead
- Immediately following any incident or near-miss
- When new properties are added
- If legislation or guidance changes

13. Reporting & Communication

- All staff and contractors must report hazards or incidents immediately
- Health & Safety Lead will coordinate investigations and corrective actions
- Updates and changes to the policy will be communicated via:
 - staff briefings
 - Digital platforms.
 - Resident newsletters (including easy-read versions)