



Falkirk Council

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FIRE AND SMOKE DETECTION INSTALL PROGRAMME

Personal Introduction

- I have been a member of Falkirk Councils electrical team for 44 years exactly to the day , I started on 23Aug 1975



- And for this reason my hair should probably be a bit more grey than it is!
- Starting as an apprentice I managed to work myself up to Assistant Maintenance coordinator looking after the electrical team
- This has enabled me to have a good insight as to all the changes that have been done and hopefully can see the changes that are still required with our properties
- However I do have the good fortune of only working 3 days and this is actually one of my days off so I wont be hanging around !

Reasons For Change



Leading by example. Scotland has implemented a change in the law for fire and smoke alarms following Grenfell. This aims to instate a high standard of protection for *all* Scottish homes, not just the private rental sector. Hence this will include both social housing premises (and will be added to the Scottish Social Housing Standard) as well as private homes.

- Following the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in London, a Ministerial Working Group on Building and Fire Safety was established to review Scotland's building and fire safety regulatory frameworks. As part of this work, the group agreed that a consultation on fire and smoke alarms, originally planned for later this year, should be prioritized.
- There were 5,310 reported fires in dwellings in 2017/18 in Scotland.

Housing Scotland Act



- Housing Scotland act is An Act of the Scottish Parliament to make provision about housing standards;
- At present section 13(1) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 sets out the criteria that must be met if a house is to comply with the Repairing Standard.
- One part of the Repairing Standard is that a house should have satisfactory provision for detecting fires and for giving warning in the event of fire or suspected fire.
- From 1 February 2021 an amendment to the statutory tolerable standard came into force under section 86 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, which will require that all houses, regardless of tenure, must have satisfactory provision for detecting fires and for giving warning in the event of fire or suspected fire. This should take place over a two year period.
- All homes will be covered by the new standard, as we believe that all homes should be safe for occupants regardless of tenure. It will be the property owner's responsibility to meet the new standard.
- . Landlords should ensure that smoke and heat alarms are regularly maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

CHANGES/REQUIREMENTS



- Changes were made to the Grades of alarm system
- Grades B and E have been removed.
- Grade B - Fire detection and alarm system comprising fire detectors (other than smoke alarms),
- E is the system where there are one or more mains-powered smoke alarms with no standby supply.
- So mains alarms with no back up have been done away with
- Grades D and F have been further split down.
- Previously Grade D was just mains powered with a battery back up, we now have D1, a mains powered alarm with battery back up, and Grade D2 , a mains powered alarm with a replaceable battery back up.
- Grade F was previously battery only we now have Grade F1 an alarm with a tamperproof battery power supply and F2 an alarm with a user replaceable battery power source.

Changes/Requirements



- One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes
- One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings
- One heat alarm installed in every kitchen
- The above constitutes the required LD2 system
- All alarms should be ceiling mounted and interlinked.
- There is also a requirement for carbon monoxide detectors to be fitted where there is a carbon-fuelled appliance or flue. It is acceptable for Co alarms to be wall mounted but the preference is on the ceiling.
- You can install tamper proof long-life lithium battery alarms or mains-wired alarms. Mains-wired alarms are generally cheaper than the tamper proof long-life battery alarms;
- The regulations come into force in February 2021, meaning homeowners and landlords have now less than two years to comply.

Falkirk Council – Past, Present, Future

- Falkirk Council have been installing hard wired mains smoke alarms for over 20 years.
- The installation type was LD3 Grade D
- This basically means that escape routes were covered by mains hard wired interlinked Optical/Ionisation Alarms normally situated at the top and bottom of the stairs or in any hallway leading out of the property.
- Initially these were fitted on an adhoc arrangement where any battery types were replaced with the above system.
- But in year 2004/5 a programme of installing mains smoke alarms was run over two years where around 6000 properties had alarms fitted



Falkirk Council – Past, Present, Future



- In 2015 Falkirk Council undertook a programme to install CO detectors in our properties with gas/solid fuel heating.
- This was approximately 12500 properties.
- A framework was set up with 2 successful contractors undertaking the works, the aim was to complete this work over a 1.5 year period.
- At this point Falkirk Council had a variety of types and makes of alarms but the decision was made to standardise type and make to enable better maintenance and stores stock.
- At this point we introduced changing any existing smoke alarms with radio linked alarms, installing a remote test button along with the CO detector.

Falkirk Council – Past, Present, Future



- Undertaking this amount of work in so many properties in a fairly short timescale can obviously present a number of challenges.
- Due to the variety of situations a contractor may find in a property we had to create up to 8 different scenarios for upgrading i.e. some had battery only , some had mains with hard wired interlink, some had radio link, some had old Dicon alarms others had AICO, . Contractors had to advise what scenario they had in each property and quote accordingly to enable our staff to accurately monitor cost and spend.
- No access rates were as high as 60 % . Strangely It is very difficult to convince tenants to give access for these types of works and therefore our area housing teams had to be involved by sending out letters explaining the benefits of not being overcome with Co fumes.
- Customer contact plays a large part in the contract as many older tenants don't understand the process of removing existing battery alarms and replacing with more up to date items.
- Try to ensure that any service provider that is undertaking the works have extremely good customer contact and on site supervision, otherwise you may find yourself being the service providers contact centre.
- Data bases had to be set up for future maintenance schedules
- There is a huge amount of certification involved.
- Supervision and post inspections are essential and very timeous when working with new service providers . We have a dedicated supervisor to look after the issuing of properties , the monitoring of invoices to ensure that the invoice matches the quoted work as well as being an onsite presence every day
- This contract however benefited our dept. Due to our properties currently having an LD3 grade D hard wired system, the adding of additional alarms became simpler and has reduced the financial impact of having to do complete installs at this date.

Falkirk Council – Past, Present, Future

- Falkirk Council Currently have a programme of EICR works that has been running since 2007.
- This programme continues to run through our Void properties and through the occupied contract both carried out by our service provider and with some carried out by our own team.
- We have completed 15675 EICRs to date out of 16297 properties
- For the last 6 months we have been installing alarms up to the new standard LD2 grade D1 (mains with 10yr battery back up) in our Voids and occupied contract and also wherever a new Gas boiler is installed.
- During this time we have currently installed 1200 new systems up to the new standard.
- Due to the instruction from the Scottish Government to maintain records we have produced a form to give to any installers to detail where any alarm was installed and to provide the recommended replacement date of any particular alarm. This information is put on a spread sheet for the electrical teams benefit and is also passed on to our Keystone asset management team to enable future maintained is carried out.



Certification

Falkirk Council		Corporate & Housing Services Building Maintenance Electrical Fire Detection Locations and Renewal Certificate		BMF EL016 Issue 2 12.06.19 Page 1 of 1
Property Address		1 Dummy Street, Falkirk.		
Post code		FK1		
Installer Details				
Company		FALKIRK COUNCIL		
Installer		FALKIRK COUNCIL		
Install date				
Unit	B = battery M = mains	Location	Replace by date (month/year)	
Smoke detector	M	HALL	SEP 2030	
Smoke detector	M	LIVINEROOM	SEP 2030	
Smoke detector				
Heat Detector	M	KITCHEN	NOV 2029	
Heat Detector				
Co Detector	M	BEDROOM	JUNE 2030	
Co Detector				
Co Detector				
Multi Detector				
Multi Detector				
Control switch	B	HALL	JULY 2029	
omments:				

- The electrical team get for each completed property
- A Minor works/Installation cert
- A certificate of Design
- A location Sheet for each alarm. This form details where each alarm is situated and when it is due for replacement due to the sensor or battery lifespan. You may find that if only a partial install is required that alarms will have differing replacement dates. It would be very costly to remove existing alarms to simply bring them all up to the same date for replacement. During the course of the installation lifespan it may be possible that an alarm might need replaced due to tenant damage, water penetration etc so having a database that can record this is essential.
- Working with providers that can provide electronic certification saves a lot of effort.

Falkirk Council – Past, Present, Future



- Moving on our systems will be an LD2 Grade D1/F1 which is mains with battery back up plus 10 yr Lithium battery type where required.
- Up to date we have approximately properties 15000 still to bring up to the new standard.
- This will be carried out using the current EICR programme and with an additional contract to carry out the rest of the works by 2021. This contract will have a value of approx. £4 m.
- By the end of this financial year we are looking to have completed approx. 6000 properties, the rest will be caught in the new financial year with the introduction of a new service provider contract.