

1.1 Water Hygiene Policy

Approval date	November 2024
Approval Level	Executive
Review Period	3 years
Next Approval Date	November 2027
Policy Owner Role Title	Building Safety and Compliance Lead
Responsible Director	Executive Director – Property and Development

Policy Checklist

Is Customer engagement required?	No
Does this policy require input or validation from external or legal experts?	No
Is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) required?	No
Is a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Required?	No
Is the Policy compliant with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements?	Yes
Has the Policy Development Guide been followed?	Yes

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2.0 Introduction and scope

This Water Hygiene Policy has been developed in line with Wandle's values, which are:

- Think customer
- Build relationships
- Work together
- Aim high
- Own it

It will ensure that actions we undertake will be underpinned by our vision of:

"Homes to be proud of and services you can trust"

Wandle recognises the importance of operating safe water services and providing adequate measures for the control of legionella bacteria, to maintain the safety and welfare of our customers, employees, visitors and contractors on Wandle premises and other premises from/for which Wandle provides services.

This policy has also been written in line with our Corporate Strategy, in particular the strategic objectives of:

- Outcomes for customers that make us proud.
- Providing homes, we would be happy to live in

This policy sets out how Wandle will ensure we keep our customers safe through a proactive regime of water safety controls.

This policy also document provides information on the methods Wandle will try to control water safety in the premises or systems it manages and over such systems that it has reasonable control.

Appendix A has more background information on the legionella bacteria.

2.1 Scope

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) L8 entitled "The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems" establishes the water hygiene standards to be adopted to comply with legal responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.

This policy is intended to ensure that Wandle meets the requirements of L8. It defines and introduces a water management plan for key controls and identifies those with distinct responsibilities under the L8 Approved Code of Practice.

The scope of this policy is applicable to all domestic and non-domestic properties where Wandle is in control of the premises (see definition in section 6 below). In the case of shared premises management, duties may arise where persons or organisations have clear responsibility through an explicit agreement such as a contract or tenancy agreement.

For example, the owner i.e. the superior landlord, takes responsibility for the common parts while the leaseholders take responsibility for the parts they occupy. In other cases, there may be an agreement to pass the responsibilities to a managing agent.

Where a managing agent is used, the management contract should clearly specify who has responsibility for maintenance and safety checks, including managing the risk from waterborne hazards. Where there is no contract or tenancy agreement in place or it does not specify who has responsibility, the duty is placed on whoever has control of the premises or part of the premises.

As the risk from legionella bacteria inside homes is low, no special measures are required to prevent and control this risk in the general/domestic housing stock, other than to ensure that hot water storage water vessels are correctly set up, to store water at above 50 °C, when they are annually serviced. These property types will be risk assessed on the basis of a rolling programme that selects 1% of our portfolio per annum, to help ensure the risk of exposure to customers of legionella bacteria is properly assessed and controlled. All customers will be provided with information on the risks and the actions they can take themselves to reduce this (see section 2.4 below). This policy extends to leaseholders' properties only where they are affected by a shared water system that Wandle is responsible for.

2.2 Performance monitoring

The Head of Assets will regularly report to the Executive and Asset Investment Committee on the progress and performance of the water risk assessment programme, in accordance with approved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which shall include:

- The water risk assessment programme including sites with an “in date” risk assessment in place
- Completion of water risk assessment identified remedial actions against an action plan for completion
- Water risk assessment actions that are overdue
- Water risk assessments undertaken on general housing stock against programme (1% of Wandle portfolio per annum)

3.0 Policy Statement

We are committed to meeting our water safety obligations as a Responsible Person and Duty holder under all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, to provide safe homes for our customers, safe workplaces for our employees and visitors in regards to legionella risks.

Wandle will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, effective management of water systems to ensure the health and safety of tenants, staff and the public by minimising the risk posed by legionella bacteria. We will aim to do this by implementing the following measures:

- Wandle will take all reasonable precautions to manage and establish effective systems to control the risk from legionella bacteria within our properties
- Wandle will undertake water risk assessments for all Wandle owned or managed properties with shared water systems at a frequency dictated by the risk assessment and deliver monitoring and management programmes as required.
- Wandle will maintain a transparent approach to water hygiene and will engage with tenants, customers, staff groups, contractors, and statutory bodies to agree and deliver solutions to legionella bacteria issues.
- Wandle will implement its Water Hygiene Policy by empowering designated operational staff with the appropriate training, skills and resources needed to safely manage water hygiene.
- If there is a risk of legionellosis or legionellosis poses a serious or imminent risk to the health of persons, Wandle will take all practical measures as soon as possible to control the risk of legionellosis.
- Whilst the risk of legionellosis is present, Wandle shall ensure that it is managed in such a manner so that the risk to the health of our customers, employees, contractors, visitors and other persons using our premises is minimised
- All work to prevent or control the risk of legionellosis shall be carried out in accordance with the current legal standards using the best working practices.

3.1 Water Management Plan - Key Controls for Managing Legionella

Wandle's approach to water management is to ensure a plan is in place for the following with more details for contracted services in the water hygiene contract specification:

- **Design and installation of water systems** – that meet appropriate regulatory requirements and industry standards, including ensuring safe operation of the system by making water circuits as simple and short/direct as possible e.g. “dead legs” (areas of non-water circulation) to be avoided.
- **Risk controls in place** for empty homes to reduce the risk from stagnant water systems as part of the Empty Homes Procedures.
- **Asset register** in place for water systems in non-domestic and domestic premises – identified through the water risk assessments.
- **Written Schemes of Control** are in place for all non-domestic shared water systems - identified through the water risk assessments.
- **Water Risk Assessment** programme in place for non-domestic shared water systems and include provision for assessments in domestic premises that includes an asset register and Written Scheme of Control for each non-domestic shared water system.
- **Water systems planned maintenance and inspection programme** – put in place from the findings of the water risk assessment and written scheme of control.
- **Water remediation programme** in place for system actions and improvements.

- **Reporting process in place for RIDDOR reportable outbreaks of Legionnaires' Disease**
- Appropriate **monitoring** in place for the programmes and outputs to ensure Wandle's Water Management approach is working effectively.

Water hygiene risk assessments

All Wandle properties with shared water systems will be risk assessed to determine if there is a reasonably foreseeable risk from legionella bacteria in water systems. These will be undertaken by approved external contractors instructed by the Building Safety & Property Compliance Team. More details of the standard for this are in the water hygiene contract specification.

The purpose of water risk assessments is to establish the risk of water borne infections including from legionella bacteria and to determine:

- Measures needed to remedy deficiencies in the hot and cold-water systems.
- The preventative and precautionary measures needed to prevent legionella bacteria growth and distribution.
- The specific monitoring scheme required at the premises.

No site-specific survey or written scheme for simple domestic premises is generally required and it is acceptable for a desktop study and archetypal survey programme to be carried out where there are large numbers of similar properties e.g. terraced houses or individual, stand-alone dwellings. Where a desktop approach is taken and the sites are deemed to be low risk and not requiring site visits to physically assess the risk, no further actions will be taken.

To support this approach to water risk assessments, we will complete full risk assessments, involving site visits, of domestic premises on the basis of a rolling programme, selecting 1% of our portfolio per annum to ensure the risk of exposure to customers of legionella is being properly assessed and controlled. Where necessary, suitable controls will be implemented from this and information from this rolling programme could dictate specific targeted assessments for similar properties where appropriate.

The assessments will be conducted in accordance with guidance document L8 and BS8580: 2019 and will include a complete inspection of the hot and cold-water storage and distribution system. The order and timescales for assessments will be prioritised based on the risks presented. This will be determined by the age of the building, its occupancy and use (including whether there are known susceptible groups in the premises i.e. elderly persons, people undergoing medical treatment and vulnerable to infection) and any pre-existing data available on legionella bacteria.

The risk assessment will identify the remedial actions necessary in order of priority to ensure the risk of Legionnaires Disease, or any other water borne infection, is minimised to an acceptable level. Following each risk assessment of a premises, a re-assessment

date will be set as required (usually 24 months) but earlier where risk assessment suggests this.

All recommendations from the water risk assessment are prioritised as high, medium or low with associated timescales as to when the work should be completed. These timescales are:

- **High Priority** - Work to be carried out immediately and within a month. (Where this is not possible, regular disinfection and temperature monitoring regime to be adopted until period of rectification)
- **Medium Priority** - within six months
- **Low Priority** - within twelve months
- **Ongoing** - as part of programme of routine and ongoing monitoring

A digital copy of the risk assessment will be held in an accessible location e.g. shared folder/system at Wandle and will be made accessible to all who need to see the information. There will also be a record for compliance purposes of all the water risk assessments, the remedial actions, the date the assessment was undertaken and when it is next due.

All records will be kept for the entire period for which they are current and for two years after that. Legionella test results will be kept for five years.

All water risk assessments will include an Asset Register and a Written Scheme of Control (see below for more details).

Asset Register – identification and recording of water systems

The water risk assessments will include an Asset Register at each premises of the water system being assessed. This will ensure there is a record of these water systems so that any issues identified with specific systems or components can be dealt with more efficiently and effectively. These Asset Registers will be uploaded onto Wandle's Asset Management system to enable this information to be available when required and for more effective long-term planning for asset management.

Written Scheme of Control - management controls, maintenance and cleaning regimes

As part of the water risk assessment, a site specific 'Scheme of Control' will be established by the risk assessor to minimise the risks of legionella and ensure good water hygiene for each premises and reviewed as part of subsequent water risk assessments. The 'Scheme of Control' will include:

- A detailed schematic drawing of the hot and cold-water system;
- A description of the correct and safe operation of the system;
- Precautions to be taken;

- The required routine water hygiene tasks and checks for the building to ensure the system is functioning efficiently (These will be listed within the electronic Water Hygiene Logbook);
- Remedial action to be taken in the event of the current scheme being shown not to be effective;
- Routine water testing/monitoring where identified for the system e.g. legionella bacteria, other general bacterial testing, e.g. Total Viable Count (TVC) etc.

Design and installation of systems

The design and installation of systems are to follow current good practice, particularly the documents listed in Section 4 below. Wandle's Asset Management, New Homes and Facilities teams, as appropriate, will ensure that these requirements are detailed in any specifications for the design and installation of any new or refurbished systems and that only suitably qualified and experienced persons are appointed to design, install, commission, test and maintain such systems.

3.2 Empty Homes

In properties that are left unoccupied for a period the legionella risk may increase as water can stagnate in the water system. We will ensure that during the Empty Homes process that appropriate checks are made for legionella where required. This currently includes turning off water during long term voids (over four weeks and part of insurance requirements) and flushing outlets when put back in service and also, flushing through outlets by Neighbourhood staff before a new let.

3.3 Suspected or confirmed cases of Legionnaires Disease

Where there is suspected or confirmed cases of legionnaires disease, a notification will be sent as a reportable disease under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) Regulations to the relevant enforcement body.

If notification is received of a suspected or confirmed case of Legionnaires Disease that is traced back to a water system under the control of Wandle, the Executive Director of Development and Property, Head of Assets, and Health, Safety and Facilities Manager should immediately be notified. The Head of Assets (as designated Responsible Person) will lead Wandle's response and nominate persons appropriately to undertake certain actions.

All cases (suspected or confirmed) will be investigated, and our typical response arrangements will include:

- Liaising with the Local Authority or Health and Safety Executive
- Complying with all requests for information/actions required to control an outbreak including shutting down of systems, cleaning or treatment works as required

- Ensuring effective and ongoing communications with those affected and other relevant persons (customers, staff, Housing Regulator, Wandle's insurers, Executive Team, Board, Media etc)
- Reporting to the HSE, under the RIDDOR Regulations, cases where it is suspected or confirmed that an employee or customer in a Wandle controlled property has contracted Legionnaires Disease
- Where applicable we will follow our Decant procedure, should a tenant be unable to stay in their property while works or investigations are under way

3.4 Information and Training

Training is an essential part of water safety precautions. The Health, Safety & Facilities Team will be responsible for ensuring that all Wandle employees are provided with the necessary information, instruction and training to fulfil their roles and responsibilities under this policy and associated procedures. This training will be in line with the health and safety TNA (training needs analysis) undertaken by the team.

The table below details the type of training for roles that Wandle will ensure will be accessible to staff:

Roles	Water Safety Activities	Water Safety Training
Building Safety & Property Compliance Team	"Responsible Person" providing water safety assistance to the Duty Holder	Qualifications that include water safety compliance with CPD updates
	Delivering the water safety programme	Legionella Responsible Person training
M&E Property Services Team	Delivering Water Pumps and Plant Room Inspection and Maintenance programme	Training in water systems
Repairs	Carrying out repairs to water systems	Legionella toolbox talk type awareness

Wandle customers will also be provided with guidance informing them of the risks of legionella and of the precautions and water safety tips they can take in their homes i.e. customer handbooks.

4.0 Responsibilities and key personnel

In addition to the roles and responsibilities set out in Wandle's Health and Safety Policy, the personnel listed below have specific duties and obligations for managing our Water Hygiene arrangements.

Wandle Board and Chief Executive

Wandle are the Duty holder in relation to water hygiene regulatory requirements. The Wandle Board sets the direction for health and safety. The Chief Executive provides this visibility at Board level and has overall responsibility for the organisation's performance on health and safety matters and for ensuring that compliance and implementation of statutory requirements in all Wandle activities is maintained, including in relation to water hygiene. Wandle discharge their Duty holder responsibilities through the Head of Assets.

Responsible Person (Water)

The Head of Assets, acting as the Duty holder for Wandle, appoints a Responsible Person for managing the control of any identified risk from legionella bacteria. The Responsible Person appointed at Wandle is the Building Safety & Compliance Lead who through the Building Safety & Property Compliance Team will:

- Lead on and manage the risk assessment programme for all relevant buildings and oversee the Management Plan detailed in this Policy
- Ensure suitable training has been undertaken in the Building Safety & Property Compliance Team to discharge the Responsible Person responsibilities
- Advise on the necessary remedial action to take following water hygiene risk assessments
- Nominate individuals to be responsible for completing the routine water hygiene tasks and checks for the premises as detailed in the risk assessment (these will be undertaken by contractors and in certain cases Wandle employees or representatives of other partners where they are the person in control of the premises)
- Ensure the necessary routine water tasks and checks are undertaken at the required frequencies and recorded
- Arrange for regular water hygiene risk assessment reviews in line with recommended timeframes from risk assessment
- Arrange for the monitoring of the effectiveness of necessary remedial works following water hygiene risk assessments and water testing.
- Provide advice and assistance on implementation of this Policy to managers in commissioning or managing any works in connection with hot and cold-water systems (and other related systems) as defined by this Policy

Health, Safety & Facilities Team

Will:

- Provide appropriate advice, training and support to employees in respect to all aspects of this Policy, its Procedures and good practice.
- Carry out the RIDDOR reporting where required of any notifiable incident relating to legionella.

Managers in New Homes, Building Safety & Property Compliance Team, Property Services (M&E) and Facilities Management, who may design or commission work on hot and cold-water systems

Must:

- Ensure that any changes to Wandle water systems are designed and constructed to ensure that the system will be safe and without risks to health
- Ensure that L8, the Water Regulations 1999 and the CIBSE guide TM13 2013 “Minimising the risk of Legionnaires” Disease” and other relevant standards are strictly followed
- Ensure any plant room or water pump system is inspected and maintained to reduce the water safety risk
- Consult the water hygiene risk assessment and written schematic for the building as part of the planning process
- Comply with all relevant British Standards
- Aid safe operation of the system by making water circuits as simple and short/direct as possible.
- Aid cleaning and disinfection to ensure those parts of the system that require routine/regular cleaning are easily accessible
- Reduce stored cold/hot water to a minimum needed to meet peak demands
- Minimise heat gain/loss by ensuring water pipes and storage tanks are insulated
- Hot and cold pipes should be suitably separated to prevent heat transfer
- Update existing schematics and register any changes with the relevant Wandle Officer
- Select materials which do not support bacterial or fungal growth e.g. polythene construction
- Lag calorifiers and hot water pipes to ensure water temperatures reach 60c and 50c respectively and make appropriate arrangements to prevent scalding of these using the system outlets
- Minimise the ingress of organic material into water storage tanks by having close fitting lids and insect screens fitted to overflow pipes

Managers in Building Safety & Property Compliance Team, Repairs, Property Services (M&E) or Facilities Management (and their contractors) who work on, or repair, hot and cold-water systems

Will:

- Ensure a risk assessment has been completed and that relevant health and safety precautions are in place for the work. (If the work is to be carried out by a contractor ensure a method statement and risk assessment is obtained from them prior to carrying out the work and that it is reviewed by a competent person prior to work starting)
- Record any changes/repairs made to the system (however minor) and record them within the site’s water hygiene logbook that is held electronically. Where

necessary the schematic will also need to be updated. Any changes to be notified to the **Head of Assets**

- Ensure that L8, the Water Regulations 1999 and the CIBSE guide TM13 2013 “Minimising the risk of Legionnaires’ Disease” and other relevant standards are strictly followed
- If unsure of any aspect of the system or whether they are competent to design/modify the system to immediately contact **Head of Assets** for direction

Water Hygiene Consultants (Risk Assessors) appointed by the Building Safety & Property Compliance team

Will:

- Ensure all work is carried out to the agreed standard in the Water Hygiene Contract Specification.
- Ensure all work is in accordance with the ACOP L8
- Ensure that those engaged in the risk assessment process are suitably qualified and competent
- Programme the water hygiene risk assessments, part of Wandle’s management plan
- Prepare a full and detailed water hygiene risk assessment of the hot and cold-water systems at various premises provided to them that includes the desktop appraisal
- Prepare a specific written scheme of control for minimising the risk from Legionella bacteria and to ensure good water hygiene at each of the premises risk assessed
- Prepare a full and detailed written schematic of the hot and cold-water system at each of the premises risk assessed
- Provide an electronic version record of the risk assessment, scheme of control and schematic of the water system
- Provide the Building Safety & Property Compliance Team and other relevant staff with adequate information, instruction and training to carry out the required local water hygiene tasks and checks listed in the Water Hygiene Logbook
- In cases of doubt, contact Wandle Building Safety & Property Compliance team for guidance and direction

Regular contract meetings will be held with all external contractors to review and monitor key performance indicators.

5.0 Related Documents

5.1 Internal

Strategies	Asset Management Strategy
Policies	Health and Safety Policy Empty Homes Policy
Procedures	Water Hygiene Management Procedures, Decant Procedure
Other internal documents	No-Access Framework

6.0 Relevant Legislation

Legislation	Main powers and relevance to Policy subject
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, s2-7	General duty to identify and manage H&S risks to employees and others affected by our undertakings
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	Stipulate the need to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks for all work activities, for the purpose of deciding what measures are necessary for safety
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002	Requirement for Wandle to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk from hazardous substances in the workplace and apply appropriate control measures to protect employees and other persons (e.g. members of the public) from harm
Approved Code of Practice L8 Legionnaires' disease: the control of Legionella bacteria in water systems	The principal statutory requirements for the control and management of Legionella bacteria is the HSE Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8 and the requirement for Wandle to effectively manage Legionella within its owned or managed properties

Legislation	Main powers and relevance to Policy subject
Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013	Reporting of injuries or dangerous occurrences. All employees and contractors of Wandle are bound by the reporting requirements covered by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR). Any confirmed cases of Legionellosis or Legionella outbreaks are reportable under these Regulations
The Water Fittings Regulations 1999	National requirements which govern the design, installation, operation and maintenance of plumbing systems, water fittings and appliances which use water
Defective Premises Act 1972	Section 4 places a 'duty of care' on the landlord in relation to any person who might be affected by a defect which would result in personal injury or damage to their property
British Standard BS 8558	Specification for design, testing, installation and maintenance of services supplying water for domestic use within buildings and their curtilages
HSG 274	HSE approved Technical Guidance which provides additional guidance to L8 covering the operation and management of specific risk systems (evaporative cooling systems, hot and cold-water systems, and other risk systems)

7.0 Definitions and Abbreviations

HASWA	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
RIDDOR	Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
Control scheme	The maintenance plans and procedures devised to eliminate or adequately control the risk of an outbreak of Legionella, pseudomonas aeruginosa or other contamination

Legionella	The term Legionella used in this document may also be construed generically to include other types of water borne bacteria e.g. pseudomonas aeruginosa, cryptosporidium
Person in control of the premises	An individual, organisation or duty holder (defined in law) responsible for building maintenance or health and safety. This can be the landlord, employer, the person in control of the water system in a property, where maintenance and safety checks have been assigned to a specific individual or organisation by way of a management agreement or contract
Responsible Person	Person who has sufficient technical training, knowledge and experience to enable him/her to understand fully the dangers of Legionella bacteria contamination and Legionellosis infection

8.0 Equality & Diversity

Equality & Diversity is central to our business; promoting fairness and opportunity for customers and staff; helping provide the best services shaped by and for customers; and right for recruiting and developing our staff.

We are committed to celebrating diversity. To ensure equal access to our services is available, Wandle will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all other legislative requirements relating to equality. We will work to avoid exclusions or restrictions that are not appropriate to the housing and support needs of our tenants and that may lead to discrimination. We will endeavour to ensure that all tenants receive a consistent level of quality service.

Equality Consideration

Under the *Equality Act 2010* Wandle must consider whether our policies adversely affect our customers and/or staff.

The following table identifies whether this policy disproportionately impacts upon any individuals in regard to the key protected characteristics, as identified in the Act:

Special Characteristic	Any impact? (Yes or No)
age	No
disability	No
gender reassignment	No
marriage and civil partnership	No
pregnancy and maternity	No
race	No

religion or belief	No
sex	No
sexual orientation	no

We do not consider this policy to disproportionately impact any individuals regarding these characteristics and therefore a detailed Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

Appendix A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT LEGIONELLA

Legionella is an infection caused by the bacterium *Legionella pneumophila*. The infection has two distinct forms:

- Legionnaires' disease,
- Pontiac fever.

People of any age may get Legionnaires' disease, but the illness most often affects middle-aged and older persons and those who are smokers, heavy drinkers, suffer from chronic respiratory or kidney disease or anyone with an impaired immune system.

Persons with Legionnaires' disease usually have fever, chills and a cough, which may be dry or may produce sputum. Some persons also have muscle aches, headache, tiredness, loss of appetite, and, occasionally, diarrhoea. Laboratory tests may show that these patients' kidneys are not functioning properly. Chest X-rays often show pneumonia. It is difficult to distinguish Legionnaires' disease from other types of pneumonia by symptoms alone; other tests are required for diagnosis. Several types of tests are available.

The time between the patient's exposure to the bacterium and the onset of illness for Legionnaires' disease is 2 to 10 days; for Pontiac fever, it is shorter, generally a few hours to 2 days.

Legionella bacteria is common in natural (rivers and lakes etc) and artificial water systems, e.g. hot and cold water systems (storage tanks, pipe work, taps and showers). However, the bacteria reproduce to high numbers in warm, stagnant water (20°C and 45°C), such as that found in certain plumbing systems and hot water tanks, cooling towers and evaporative condensers of large air-conditioning systems, and whirlpool spas. High temperatures of 60°C and over will kill them.

Outbreaks of Legionnaires' disease have occurred after persons have breathed mists that come from a water source (e.g., air conditioning cooling towers, whirlpool spas, showers) contaminated with *Legionella* bacteria. Persons may be exposed to these mists in homes, workplaces, hospitals, or public places. Legionnaires' disease is not passed from person to person.