



Electrical  
Safety  
First

SAFETY GUIDANCE

# ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN COMMUNAL AREAS OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

ENGLAND & WALES



[electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)



Powering change + saving lives.



In electronic format, this Guide is intended to be made available free of charge to all interested parties. Further copies may be downloaded from the websites of some of the contributing organisations.

The version of this Guide on the Electrical Safety First website ([www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)) will always be the latest.

Feedback on any of our Guides is always welcome  
email: [enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

Electrical Safety First is supported by all sectors of the electrical industry, approvals and research bodies, consumer interest organisations, the electrical distribution industry, professional institutes and institutions, regulatory bodies, trade and industry associations and federations, trade unions, and local and central government.



Published by:  
Electrical Safety First  
45 Great Guildford Street, London SE1 0ES  
Email: [enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)  
Website: [electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

Electrical Safety First and other contributors believe that the guidance and information contained in this Guide is correct, but all parties must rely on their own skill and judgement when making use of it.

Neither Electrical Safety First nor any contributor assumes any liability to anyone for any loss or damage caused by any error or omission in this Guide, whether such error or omission is the result of negligence or any other cause. Where reference is made to legislation, it is not to be considered as legal advice. Any and all such liability is disclaimed.

© Electrical Safety First. January 2025

Electrical Safety First is indebted to the following organisation for their contribution and/or support to the development of this guide:



The Property Institute  
[www.tpi.org.uk](http://www.tpi.org.uk)

# CONTENTS



1	INTRODUCTION	04
2	AIM	05
3	THE LAW	06
4	YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES	11
5	ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS	15
6	CERTIFICATION, DIAGRAMS & LABELLING	17
7	PERIODIC INSPECTION, TESTING & CONDITION REPORTING	19
8	IN-SERVICE INSPECTION AND TESTING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (ITEE)	22
9	FINDING A REGISTERED ELECTRICIAN	23
10	FURTHER READING	24
ANNEX A:	ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES TO DWELLINGS	25



# 1. INTRODUCTION

**This Guide focuses on electrical safety in communal areas and is produced principally for landlords, management companies and managing agents. However, electrical contractors, installers and tenants may also find the information useful.**

In relation to electrical safety in the common parts of multi-occupied residential buildings, the dutyholder will be an employer or self-employed person who has, to any degree, control in relation to electrical safety, to the extent of their control.

The person or employer in control will depend on the lease for the property and the management agreement for any contracted services.

The primary duty holder is usually the Landlord or a resident-led management company (Resident Management Company or Right to Management Company).

Managing Agents will also have duties where they have agreed in their management agreement to manage electrical safety or electrical installation in the building on behalf of the primary duty holder

The purpose of this Guide is to provide those having the responsibility of looking after communal areas (accessible by staff, tenants, and others visiting the property) with the right information so that they can meet their legal obligations.

As a Guide, though, it has not been possible to cover every aspect of electrical safety. So, to assist readers, references to other publications and/or website addresses have been provided.

It is not, however, our intention for you to purchase any such publications.



## HAZARDS

**The three major hazards from electricity in buildings are electric shock, fire and burns  
These can occur through:**

- **The electrical installation and appliances deteriorating over time.**
- **Damage to switches, socket-outlets and appliances.**
- **Misuse of the installation and appliances.**
- **Poor or lack of maintenance of the installation.**
- **Vandalism.**

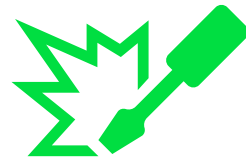
## 2. AIM

**The aim of this guide is to provide you with an overview of your responsibilities to help you ensure the safety of employees, contractors or any other person working in, or passing through, the common parts of residential buildings you own or manage.**

Examples of such locations are provided and, more importantly, this guide provides guidance on the checks and/or maintenance that should be done on the electrical equipment within those areas - so that you can stay on the right side of the law. This guide does not consider electrical safety within leasehold or tenanted flats. For those who manage tenanted properties Electrical Safety First have provided a Landlords guide to electrical safety. <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/u5gpmrzz/landlords-guide-england-and-wales-june-2020.pdf>

To assist you with the above, the guide also addresses periodic inspection, testing and reporting of electrical installations, the inspection and testing of electrical equipment (where provided by the duty holder), plus outlines some guidance on what to ask for when assessing the competence (e.g. qualifications) of an employee - or selected contractor - undertaking such work.

Although it may not be obvious to some, electrical safety isn't just about the protection of persons from the dangers of electric shock. Fire is also a danger to property and life, which can result from an overloaded circuit or faulty electrical wiring.



**England & Wales have a relatively good record of electrical safety but the most recent figures available show that in a typical year\*:**

- **Every year around 70 deaths and 350,000 injuries in homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment. Almost half of all domestic fires are caused by electricity.**
- **There will be approximately 20,000 accidental electrical fires in homes, resulting in around 50 deaths and 3,500 injuries.**

*Following the guidance in this document will also therefore form part of the controls that the Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO) will need to take to reduce the risk of fires of electrical origin.*

# 3. THE LAW AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

**Landlords, management companies and their managing agents are responsible for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Relevant Statutory Provisions (secondary legislation made under the Act) within the common parts of a block of flats - so far as it relates to matter within their control. The secondary legislation covering electricity at work is the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.**

The Court of Appeal in Westminster City Council v. Select Management Ltd (1984) upheld that the common parts of residential premises could be considered non-domestic premises because they were available for use by others as a place of work.

## 3.1 ELECTRICITY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1989 (EAWR)

Those involved in ensuring electrical safety need to comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations [EAWR] which imposes duties on employers and self-employed persons to comply with the provisions of the Regulations in so far as they relate to matters which are within their control.

Responsibility in the communal areas of residential properties will vary and depend on the tenure, the provisions of any leases and any the provisions of any maintenance contracts.

Landlords and management companies (resident management companies and right to manage companies) are usually the primary duty holders in residential properties although Managing

Agents and contractors can be a duty holder when they agree to undertake work in relation to electrical safety. Duties are however only imposed on employers in relation to matters which are within their control.

***Where the term you is used in the guide, it will only apply where you are an employer and the matter is within your control.***

### The key requirements are:

- All electrical systems shall at all times be of such construction as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, danger.
- Any equipment provided under the Regulations for the purpose of protecting persons at work on or near electrical equipment shall be suitable for the use for which it is provided, be maintained in a condition suitable for that use, and be properly used.
- Every work activity, including operation, use and maintenance of an electrical system and work near an electrical system, shall be carried out in such a manner as not to give rise, so far as is reasonably practicable, to danger.
- Any work activities of any sort, whether directly or indirectly associated with an electrical system, must be carried out in a way which, as far as is reasonably practicable, does not give rise to danger.
- As may be necessary to prevent danger, all electrical systems shall be maintained so as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, such danger.

- To prevent injury, adequate working space, adequate means of access, and adequate lighting shall be provided at all electrical equipment on which or near which work is being done in circumstances which may give rise to danger.

*To comply with the EAWR - and key requirements as above - the safe isolation procedure would be implemented;*

## Safe Isolation

Employers (and including self-employed persons) that expose employees and others to risks, must ensure that they have safe systems of work in place to protect their employees and others from the dangers of electricity.

One example of a safe system of work employed by the duty holder is the safe isolation procedure - this is a fundamental requirement of the EAWR;

## Regulation 13: Precautions for work on equipment made dead

*Adequate precautions shall be taken to prevent electrical equipment, which has been made dead in order to prevent danger while work is carried out on or near that equipment, from becoming electrically charged during that work if danger may thereby arise.*

Regulation 14 of the EAWR clearly states that any electrical systems/circuits should not be worked on unless they are/have been made 'dead'.

## Regulation 14: Work on or near live conductors

*No person shall be engaged in any work activity on or so near any live conductor (other than one suitably covered with insulating material so as to prevent danger) that danger may arise unless -*

- (a) it is unreasonable in all the circumstances for it to be dead; and*
- (b) it is reasonable in all the circumstances for him to be at work on or near it while it is live; and*
- (c) suitable precautions (including where necessary the provision of suitable protective equipment) are taken to prevent injury.*

Further information can be found here - Best Practice Guide 2 on the management of electrical safety and safe isolation procedures for low voltage installations: <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/professional-resources/best-practice-guides/>





## 3.2: PART P BUILDING REGULATIONS

In 2005 the Government introduced electrical safety rules into the Building Regulations for England and Wales. Because of this, most fixed electrical installation work must, by law, meet the Building Regulations.

Part P states that anyone carrying out electrical installation work must make sure that the work is designed and installed to protect people from fire and electric shocks.

**For England, Approved Document P (2013 edition):**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/441872/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_P\\_2013.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441872/BR_PDF_AD_P_2013.pdf)

**For Wales, Approved Document P (2006 edition with 2010 amendments):**

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/building-regulations-guidance-part-p-electrical-safety.pdf>

### Communal Areas

**Part P applies to electrical installations in common parts both internally and externally as below:**

- Common access parts in blocks of flats, such as corridors and staircases (but not lifts).
- Shared amenities, such as laundries and gymnasium.
- Combined dwelling and business premises having a common supply, such as shops and pubs with a flat above.

- Electrical installations in outbuildings (such as boiler rooms and garages) that receive their electricity from a consumer unit in a dwelling.
- Parts of electrical installations in gardens associated with dwellings, such as for outside lighting.

**This means that there are some overlaps between Part P and the EAWR but this is intentional, to avoid any legal loopholes.**

### Requirements

Except for some types of minor work, if work is carried out in electrical installations in residential premises, you must either:

- Notify a building control body (usually your local authority building control department) before the work starts, or
- Have it carried out by an electrician who is registered with one of the Government-authorised Part P competent person scheme operators (**see section 11, Finding a registered electrician**), or
- In England, have the work inspected and tested by a registered third party certifier.

These requirements apply not only to new construction - but also to existing installations, including full and partial rewires - or for an alteration or addition in a special location.

The legal requirements apply to all electrical installation work in dwellings in England and Wales, whether carried out professionally or by DIY, whether or not 'minor work', and whether or not is notifiable to a building control body.



***'Minor work' is any installation work that does not involve the addition of a new circuit.***

***Examples of such work include the addition of socket-outlets or lighting points to existing circuits, or the relocation of a light switch or socket-outlet.***

## **Limitations on the application of the requirements**

The requirements apply to installations intended to operate at low or extra-low voltage. The extra-low voltage band (covering voltages not exceeding 50 V AC or 120 V ripple-free DC, whether between conductors or to Earth) is included.

Also, for the purposes of Part P, 'electrical installations' are deemed to include everything downstream of the electricity supply meter. The meter and everything upstream of it are the responsibility of the meter operator or electricity distributor.

## **Confirmation of compliance to Building Control**

Persons self-certifying compliance with Part P are required to provide certain information for Building Control purposes within 30 days of completion of the work. The information is required by Building Control in electronic form.

## **3.3: FIRE SAFETY (ENGLAND & WALES)**

The following legislation imposes duties in relation to fire safety in blocks of flats:

- The Fire Safety Act 2021 (England & Wales).

- The Building Safety Act 2022.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as amended by the Fire Safety Act 2021);
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022.
- The Building Regulations 2010 (as amended); and
- The Housing Act 2004. The most significant of these is perhaps the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

## **What are my duties under fire safety?**

To enable you to determine what your duties are a good practice guide - for those involved in the management of fire safety in properties in the residential long leasehold sector - is available here to download from The Property Institute (TPI):

**<https://www.buildingsafetyhub.org.uk/media/dppankru/tpi-advice-note-fire-safety-management-in-flats.pdf>**



To reduce the likelihood of an electrical fire you should ensure electrical consumer unit/ distribution boards are located in secure locked cupboards or rooms which are separated from escape routes with fire-resisting construction.

**Where the lease permits, you should also consider the use of key-operated socket-outlets within common parts to help restrict access to cleaners and other legitimate users.**

Those carrying out property inspections should ensure that:

- Any obvious damage to electrical fittings and equipment within the common parts is identified and repaired promptly;
- There is no storage or rubbish within cupboards or rooms that house electrical distribution equipment;
- Residents do not connect wiring from their flats to decorative lights or other equipment in the common parts;
- Residents do not use socket-outlets in the common parts to charge their appliances or power equipment within their flats;

*The charging of mobility scooters in common parts presents a particular risk. A recent BRE report concluded that “a fire involving mobility scooters, within the confines of a corridor or stairway, will create a substantial risk to occupants since the smoke and heat will make such routes impassable and put at risk any occupants who open their doors.”*

Guidance on mobility scooters can be found here: [https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/09062018\\_NFCC\\_Mobility\\_Scooter\\_Guidance\\_Final.pdf](https://nfcc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/09062018_NFCC_Mobility_Scooter_Guidance_Final.pdf)

**Further fire safety guidance can also be found in:**

- Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats which was published by the Local Government Association (LGA) in July 2011; [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e9def-95b6524001af21bcc/Fire\\_Safety\\_in\\_Purpose\\_Built\\_Blocks\\_of\\_Flats\\_Guide-update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e9def-95b6524001af21bcc/Fire_Safety_in_Purpose_Built_Blocks_of_Flats_Guide-update.pdf)

and

- Housing – Fire Safety published by LACoRS which provides guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing; <https://www.londonpropertylicensing.co.uk/sites/default/files/pdfs/Lacors%20Fire%20Safety%20Guide.pdf>

# 4. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

This section of the Guide is to highlight the responsibilities of Landlords, management companies and their managing agents. Along with the fixed electrical installation in communal areas (see section 5), you are also responsible for the following:

## 4.1 FIRE DETECTION AND ALARM SYSTEMS

- The 230 V electrical supply to a fire alarm system should be identified on an Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC) and tested during any periodic inspection.
- *Fire detection and alarm systems are not covered in this guide, please refer to BS 5839 (parts 1 and 6) for more information.*



## 4.2 EMERGENCY LIGHTING

- In the event of fire - and other events - people within the building need to be able to find their way out of the property to a place of safety. This requires a planned escape route which is kept free from clutter and has sufficient lighting to allow for a fast (and safe) escape.
- *Emergency lighting is not covered in this guide, please see BS 5266 documentation for further information.*



## 4.3 ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES TO EACH DWELLING

The organisation that is responsible in the lease for the electrical supply cable after the meter to each dwelling, is often referred to as the Building Network Operator (BNO).

- The arrangement of these systems will vary; the supplies may be in a lockable enclosure in the communal area(s) at the 'origin' of the installation, or
- The electrical supplies may be spread out on each floor via an electrical 'riser' - again in a lockable cupboard.

**Note: An electrical 'riser' is an access point for electrical; cabling and containment between each floor of a building**

- Access and inspection of any riser within the building should be undertaken during any periodic inspection and testing.
- All occupants should be aware that these areas are not used for storage of any items.
- **See Annex A for further information**



Image courtesy of MAK Electrical Services.

## 4.4 ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES FOR ANY OUTSIDE POWER/ AMENITY LIGHTING

**Examples may include:**

- Parking and refuse areas.
- Pathways and gardens.



*Note: Some outdoor lighting may be controlled by a time-clock and/or a photocell (as shown in far right image).*

## 4.5 ELECTRIC VEHICLE CAR CHARGING

**With more emphasis on low carbon technology, EV car charging points are becoming more prominent in installations in the UK.**

If provided on your premises, any EV car charging points (and electrical supplies to them) will have to be maintained and regularly inspected and tested.

More information and guidance on EV charging can be downloaded here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1065576/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065576/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf)



## 4.6 DOOR ENTRY SYSTEMS

The electrical supplies to these systems will need to be inspected and tested as part of ongoing EICRs and reactive maintenance, to ensure the safety of the building(s) and its residents.

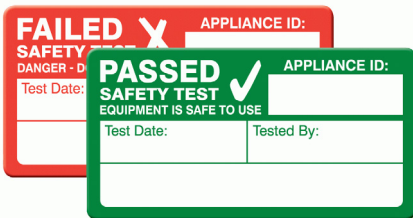


## 4.7 IN-SERVICE INSPECTION AND TESTING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (ITEE)

The majority of electrical accidents and fatalities in residential properties are caused by faulty plugs, leads and appliances.

Therefore, in order to reduce those accidents and deaths, you (or an appointed person or contractor) can take some simple steps to ensure that electrical equipment - if supplied - is safely used, stored, and checked on a regular basis (where applicable).

- See section 8 for further information.



## 4.8 ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES TO LIFTS

The electrical supply/circuit to a lift (where applicable), will need to be inspected and tested as part of ongoing EICRs and reactive maintenances.

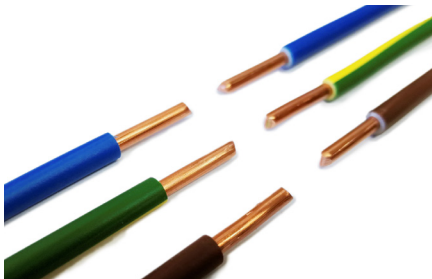
- See section 7 for further information on EICR's and Periodic Inspection & Testing.



# 5. ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

An electrical installation comprises all the fixed electrical equipment that is supplied through the electricity meter. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the walls and ceilings, accessories (such as socket outlets, switches and light fittings), and the consumer unit/distribution board that contains all the fuses, circuit-breakers and, preferably residual current devices (RCDs).

Over time, and with the wear and tear of regular use, the installation will start to deteriorate. Connections can work loose (a potential fire hazard), equipment can be damaged, and building and maintenance work can have an impact on the wiring.



There are many factors that contribute to a 'good' electrical installation, such as ensuring:

- Covers are in place to prevent fingers coming into contact with live parts (broken or damaged switches and socket-outlets should be replaced without delay).
- A residual current device\* (RCD) is installed to provide additional protection against electric shock (see also Section 6 of this guide).
- Sufficient circuits are provided to avoid danger and minimise inconvenience in the event of a fault.
- Satisfactory earthing arrangements are in place to ensure that a fuse or circuit breaker can quickly clear an electrical fault before it causes an electric shock or fire.
- Satisfactory protective bonding arrangements are in place where required (so any electric shock risk is minimised until a fault is cleared).
- Cables are correctly selected and installed in relation to the fuse or circuit-breaker protecting the circuit.

*\*An RCD (residual current device) is a life-saving device which is designed to prevent you from getting a fatal electric shock if you touch something live, such as a bare wire. It provides a level of protection that ordinary fuses or circuit-breakers cannot. An RCD may be present in the consumer unit/distribution board, in a socket-outlet(s), or as a plug-in device.*



One simple thing you can do to see if your electrical installation is safe, is to carry out a regular visual check as part of routine property inspections. Things to look out for include:

- Broken accessories (such as socket-outlets and light switches).
- Signs of scorching around socket-outlets due to overloading.
- Overheating of electrical equipment (such as lamp holders fitted with the wrong lamps) – usually detected by a strong, often fishlike, smell.
- Damaged cables to portable electrical appliances or trailing cables/flexes.
- Lack of RCD protection for circuits, particularly those supplying socket-outlets.

Where such hazards are identified, you have a duty of care to put the situation right as soon as practicable.

Regular visual safety checks do not replace the need for a periodic inspection to be carried out every five years.

Electrical Safety First has produced a Landlords interim checklist to assist those carrying out such checks. This may be downloaded from <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/1606/landlords-interim-checklist-2014.pdf>



Typical communal corridor containing lighting and power.



Overheated light fitting (wrong lamp used).



Damaged light switch.

Electrical Safety First  
electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

### LANDLORDS INTERIM CHECKLIST

**ELECTRICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST**

**Conditions of use**  
This checklist should only be used where both:  
 A competent person has carried out a full inspection of the installation in accordance with BS 7671  
 Any defects identified on the DCC have been addressed

**Name:** Please complete for electrical safety person. **Date:** (Date completed)

**Address of property:** Please list address of the property being inspected.

**Checklist summary:** Please tick each of the electrical safety (ES) and safety for children (SFC) items.

ES/SFC	Item	Y	N	U
1	Check that the main switch is located in a readily accessible place			
2	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
3	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
4	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
5	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
6	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
7	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
8	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
9	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			
10	Check that the main switch is clearly marked			

**Comments:** Please use appropriate, any other comments regarding the electrical safety of the premises.

Electrical Safety First Landlords interim checklist.

# 6. CERTIFICATION, DIAGRAMS, & LABELLING OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION WORK

All systems shall at all times be of such construction as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, danger. The Requirements for Electrical Installations - BS 7671 - is a code of practice which is widely recognised and accepted in the UK; compliance with it is likely to achieve compliance with relevant aspects of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

A requirement of BS 7671 is all electrical work in the common parts of the building (and any external supplies), will require a form of certification. This will be issued by the electrical contractor on completion of any work. The type of certification or report you receive depends on the extent and type of electrical installation work, or inspection and testing, you have had carried out.

When a contractor issues a certificate (of any type as below) they will issue the original to the person ordering the work, and will also retain a copy of it for future reference.

***Certification and associated paperwork should be kept for all completed electrical installation work and periodic inspection and testing (for periodic inspection & testing, see section 7). All certificates and reports should include schedules of inspections and test results.***

## 6.1 ELECTRICAL CERTIFICATION FOR NEW INSTALLATIONS, ALTERATIONS OR ADDITIONS

Electrical Installation Certificates (EICs) and Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWCs) provide you, as the person responsible for the safety of an electrical installation, with a declaration that the new installation, or alteration or addition, is safe to use at the time it was put into service.

These certificates, if retained, also provide a basis for any further inspection and testing, as they can help save on costly exploratory work which might otherwise be needed in future. Additionally, in the event of a claim that injury or fire was caused by an electrical installation, certificates are documentary evidence which help show that the installation had been installed to a satisfactory standard of safety.

The EIC will indicate whether the electrical work that has been carried out is **'new', an 'addition' or an 'alteration'**;

The term **'new'** applies where the whole installation has been installed as new, if a complete rewire has been carried out, or where a consumer unit/ distribution board on board has been replaced.

The term **'addition'** applies if an existing installation has been modified by adding one or more new circuits.

The term **'alteration'** applies where one or more existing circuits have been modified or extended (for example to add a socket-outlet), or items such as consumer unit/ distribution board and switching.

An EIC must be issued for all new electrical installations. It may also be required for an alteration or addition to the installation – depending upon whether or not a new circuit has been installed. Where an alteration or addition is carried out but does not include a new circuit, a MEIWC may be used.

We strongly recommend that you use a registered electrician to carry out any electrical installation work. Information on how to find a registered electrician can be found on Electrical Safety First’s website at [www.electricalsafety-first.org.uk/findanelectrician](http://www.electricalsafety-first.org.uk/findanelectrician) and also in section 11.

## 6.2 DIAGRAMS

BS 7671 requires that a legible diagram, chart or table or equivalent form shall be provided indicating the particular:

- Type and composition of each circuit (points of utilisation served, number and size of conductors, type of wiring); and
- The methods used for compliance with Chapter 41 of BS 7671 (protection against electric shock; and
- Any circuit or equipment vulnerable to a typical test.

*For a simple installation the information may be given in a schedule. A durable copy of the schedule relating to the consumer unit/distribution board shall be provided within or adjacent to the consumer unit/distribution board.*

## 6.3 LABELLING

BS 7671 requires that a notice of such durable material as to be likely to remain easily legible throughout the life of the installation, shall be fixed in a prominent position at or near the origin of the installation. The most convenient location for these notices is usually on the consumer unit/distribution board.

**IMPORTANT**

This installation should be periodically inspected and tested and a report on its condition obtained, as prescribed in BS 7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations.

Date of last inspection .....

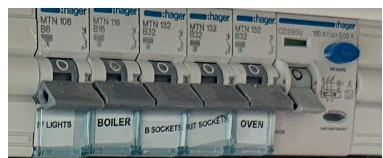
Recommended date of next inspection .....

Where RCDs are provided, a notice shall also be displayed saying:

This installation, or part of it, is protected by a device which automatically switches off the supply if a fault develops. Test six-monthly by pressing the relevant test button(s) which should operate the device. Afterwards, manually switch on the device. If the device does not operate, or indicates a fault, seek expert advice.

**Note: These requirements may not need applying where certification for initial verification (complete with Guidance for Recipients detailed in Appendix 6 of BS 7671), has been issued to the person ordering the work.**

In addition, each fuse or circuit-breaker should be labelled so that the circuit protected by the device can be easily identified.



# 7. PERIODIC INSPECTION, TESTING AND CONDITION REPORTING

**Every electrical installation deteriorates with use and age. You must ensure that anyone entering or using your property is not put at risk by ensuring that the electrical installation remains in a safe and serviceable condition.**

The EAWR states: *In assessing the suitability of the construction of electrical systems, consideration should be given to all likely or reasonably foreseeable conditions of actual application or use of the electrical equipment in the system. This will include the testing, commissioning, operation and maintenance of the equipment throughout the life of the system.*

Periodic inspection & testing checks the condition of an existing installation against BS 7671, the UK standard for the safety of electrical installations.

Periodic inspection and testing will demonstrate compliance with BS7671 with your duties under the EAWR and is therefore strongly recommended.

**The main purpose of periodic inspection & testing is to check that the electrical installation is safe to use.**

**After a periodic inspection, you should always be given an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR)** containing details of the inspection and testing undertaken, the outcomes of the inspection and testing with recommendations as to what remedial action (if any) is required, and a declaration of whether or not the installation is safe for continued use.

A schedule of circuit details and test results should be provided as part of the Electrical Installation Condition Report. A copy of these should be kept next to the consumer unit/distribution board for information purposes.

The image shows a typical example of an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) form. The form is titled "ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORT" and is issued by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET). It includes sections for "PART 1: DETAILS OF THE CONTRACTOR, CLIENT AND INSTALLATION", "PART 2: PURPOSE OF THE REPORT", "PART 3: SUMMARY OF THE CONDITION OF THE INSTALLATION", and "PART 4: CONCLUSION". The form contains various fields for client and contractor information, a table for test results, and a section for recommendations and observations.

*Typical example of an Electrical Installation Condition Report*

## Periodic inspection & testing should:

- **Discover if electrical circuits or equipment are overloaded.**
- **Identify potential electric shock risks and fire hazards.**
- **Find any defective electrical work.**
- **Highlight any lack of earthing or bonding. Further information explaining the importance of earthing and bonding can be found at: <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guidance/safety-around-the-home/earthing-and-bonding>**

## 7.1 OBSERVATIONS

The periodic inspection and testing procedures should identify any damage, deterioration, defects and conditions within the installation that give rise, or potentially give rise, to danger. The procedures should also identify any inadequacies for which remedial action would contribute to a significant improvement in the safety of the electrical installation.

After due consideration, each such observed safety issue should be recorded at the appropriate point in the inspection or test results schedule, and further detailed in the 'observations' section of the report.

The observations should be based on the requirements of the edition of BS 7671 current at the time of the inspection, not on the requirements of an earlier edition current at the time the installation was constructed.

An Electrical Installation Condition Report is intended to be a factual report on the condition of an installation, not a proposal for remedial work.

Therefore, each recorded observation should describe a specific defect, omission or item for which improvement is recommended.

The observation should detail what the situation is, and not what is considered necessary to put it right.

## 7.2 CLASSIFICATION CODES

Each observation relating to a concern about the safety of the installation should be attributed an appropriate Classification Code selected from the standard codes C1, C2, C3 and F1. Each code has a particular meaning:

CODE C1	'Danger present'. Risk of injury Immediate remedial action required
CODE C2	'Potentially dangerous'. Urgent remedial action required
CODE C3	'Improvement recommended'
CODE F1	'Further investigation required'

Only one of these standard Classification Codes will be attributed to each observation.

**Note: Any observations with C1 or C2 recorded will result in a fail/unsatisfactory report overall.**

Where the inspection and testing procedures identify an item where **there is danger present or potentially dangerous**, it will be identified in the inspection or test results schedule of the report by attributing to it a Classification **Code C1 or C2**, as appropriate, in the 'outcome' column of the inspection schedule and in section K of the report.

Where the inspection and testing procedures identify an item where **there is no danger present, nor it deemed potentially dangerous**, but for which improvement is recommended, it will be identified in the inspection or test results schedule of the report by a Classification **Code C3** in the 'outcome' column of the inspection schedule and in section K of the report.

***A C3 would always be recommended to the client, but should not necessarily affect the overall electrical safety of the installation - however, it may enhance it further.***

Where during inspection and testing, if there is danger present that puts the safety of those using the installation at risk, a Classification **Code C1** (danger present) will be given.

Where a Classification Code C1 is considered appropriate, the client would be advised immediately, and also in writing, that immediate remedial action is required (or has been taken) to remove the danger.

**Wherever an item in the inspection or test results schedule has been attributed a Classification Code C1, C2, C3 or FI, there should be a corresponding observation in the 'observations' section K of the report.**

## 7.3 FREQUENCY OF PERIODIC INSPECTIONS

A periodic inspection of the electrical installations in communal areas in England should be carried out every five years. We recommend the same for properties in Wales.

However, the person compiling the Electrical Installation Condition Report may recommend a shorter interval before the next inspection based upon the findings of the inspection and testing that has been carried out.

## 7.4 CERTIFICATION OF REMEDIAL WORKS CALLED FOR BY AN EICR

Where the overall result of the periodic inspection & testing is given in the EICR as unsatisfactory, remedial work will be necessary to rectify the issue(s) identified as warranting a Code C1 (danger present) or Code C2 (potentially dangerous) outcome before the installation can be deemed to be in a satisfactory condition. Any remedial works should be carried out without delay/within a reasonable time frame to ensure the safety of all persons within the building

In most cases, probably the most effective, and easy to document, method of demonstrating that the necessary remedial work has been carried out is by the issue of:

- An Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC), particularly where the remedial work was carried out on more than one circuit, or
- A Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate (MEIWC) where remedial action was only necessary on a single circuit within the communal areas of the property.

**See part 6 for information on EIC's and MEIWC's.**

# 8. IN-SERVICE INSPECTION AND TESTING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (ITEE)

**The safety of electrical equipment relies, to some extent, on the condition of the fixed wiring – but misusing electrical appliances will increase the risk of electric shock and fire.**

## 8.1 SAFETY & STANDARDS

It is a legal requirement to maintain electrical equipment (where provided) under the EAWR:

*The term /system/ includes all parts of a system/ e.g conductors and electrical equipment in it and is not a reference solely to the functional circuit as a whole. It follows that something required of a system is required both of the system as a whole and of the equipment and conductors in it.*

*'Electrical equipment/ as defined in the Regulations includes every type of electrical equipment from/ for example/ a high-voltage transmission overhead line to a battery-powered hand lamp.*

Freeholders, landlords, management companies and managing agents should ensure that manufacturers' instructions (relating to any provided electrical equipment) are available to those likely to use that electrical equipment.

It is a requirement that any appliances used carry additional safety marks, such as the British Standard Kitemark or the 'BEAB Approved' mark, as these can provide greater assurance of electrical safety.

## 8.2 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT USED BY CONTRACTORS

Where you commission others to undertake work within the common parts of residential blocks of flats it is important that any equipment that they use is UKCA marked, is suitable for the task it is to be used for and is subject to regular basic safety checks.

## 8.3 CHECKING ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

To ensure electrical equipment remain safe to use, regular basic safety checks should be carried out.

How often these checks are carried out is a matter of judgement by the dutyholder, and should be based on an assessment of risk.

It is up to the dutyholder, with appropriate advice where necessary, to assess the conditions affecting equipment, which may lead to potential damage and/or deterioration.

For more HSE information on maintaining electrical equipment & frequency of testing, go to: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg107.pdf>

**Note: Electrical equipment inspection & testing results - all reports should be kept along with any other important property documentation.**





# 9. FINDING A REGISTERED ELECTRICIAN

The following organisations are authorised by the Government to register electricians so they can carry out electrical work and periodic inspection & testing in communal areas of residential premises within the scope of Part P of the Building Regulations.

This means that in addition to a BS 7671 certificate for electrical work, a Building Regulations Certificate will also be provided (where applicable).

## **NICEIC**

Telephone: 0870 013 0382  
Website: [www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com)

## **NAPIT**

Telephone: 0345 543 0330  
Website: [www.napit.org.uk](http://www.napit.org.uk)

## **Blue Flame Certification**

Telephone: 0845 194 90 31  
Website: [www.blueflamecertification.com](http://www.blueflamecertification.com)



## **Competency**

Electrical supervisors (commonly known as qualified supervisors) of businesses registered with one of the other government approved scheme providers, (mentioned adjacent) will have had, amongst other things, their qualifications, experience and samples of their work checked to confirm that they have the knowledge and experience to carry out electrical works in accordance with BS 7671.

Using a registered electrician will place less responsibility on you to decide whether an electrician is competent or not.

To find a registered electrician in your area, visit: [\*\*www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician\*\*](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician)

# 10. FURTHER READING

As mentioned at the beginning of this Guide, it was not our intention to cover every aspect of electrical safety. Therefore, for more detailed information reference should be made to the following documents:



## Health and Safety Executive [HSE] Guidance

HSR25 The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989: Guidance on Regulations <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsr25.pdf>

HSG85 Electricity at Work: Safe Working Practices <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg85.pdf>

INDG231 Electrical safety and you: A brief guide <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg231.pdf>

HSG107 Maintaining portable electrical equipment <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg107.pdf>

INDG236 Maintaining portable electric equipment in low-risk environments <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf>

INDG354 Safety in electrical testing at work <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg354.pdf>

HSE Electrical safety at work <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm>

## Other Guidance

Electrical Safety First: Best Practice Guides <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/professional-resources/best-practice-guides/>

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET): Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment <https://shop.theiet.org/code-of-practice-for-in-service-inspection-and-testing-of-electrical-equipment-5th-edition>

BS 7671 Requirements for electrical installations. IET Wiring Regulations. Eighteenth Amendment 2 2022 <https://shop.theiet.org/requirements-for-electrical-installations-iet-wiring-regulations-eighteenth-edition-bs-7671-2018-a2-2022>

# ANNEX A

## ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES TO EACH DWELLING (4.3)

### **The Energy Networks Association (ENA) produced the Engineering Recommendation G87\* – LV Supplies to Multi-Occupied Buildings national standard to provide guidance for multi-occupied buildings.**

This current national position provides a common framework for the responsibilities and liabilities of each party involved in a multi-occupied building:

- Allowing direct access to metering for customers allowing them to connect to energy suppliers of their choice;
- Providing clarity on how the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 as amended (ESQCR) apply to all network operators between distribution and supply points; and
- Provides a basis for common working across the UK

### **A Building Network Operator (BNO) is defined in G87 as:**

*'The organisation that owns or operates the electricity distribution network within a multiple occupancy building between the intake position and the customer's installation.'*

The BNO may be a building owner, landlord, developer or similar function in control of a building infrastructure. A BNO may appoint a third party to act as the network operator on their behalf.

An organisation may be a BNO if they are a:

- Residents Management Company (RMC);
- Right to Manage Company (RTM);
- Residential Managing Agent; or
- Electrical Contractor.

The BNO must ensure that the requirements of G87 – LV Supplies to Multi-Occupied Buildings are adhered to in order for the local electrical DNO to connect to and to maintain supplies to the building.

Any development which requires multiple, individually-metered supplies to the same building will have a BNO installation. This is because the regional DNOs, who own and manage the local electricity network, will not allow multiple electrical supplies to the same building.

*\*Engineering recommendations G87 – Guidelines for the Provision of Low Voltage Connections to Multiple Occupancy Buildings: [https://www.dcode.org.uk/assets/uploads/ENA\\_EREC\\_G87\\_Issue\\_2\\_2015\\_.pdf](https://www.dcode.org.uk/assets/uploads/ENA_EREC_G87_Issue_2_2015_.pdf)*

There are three parties involved in any BNO arrangement with each owner being responsible for their network equipment:

- **DNO** – For a new building the DNO responsibility ends at the customer side of the intake be it a cut out supply, the feeder way on an LV board or the cable end box of an HV or EHV supply;
- **BNO** – Owns everything beyond the DNO point of demarcation **EXCEPT** any meters embedded within the BNO network or attached to DNO equipment, these act as islands of ownership within each network. The BNO has the additional responsibility of the building and the infrastructure of the building;
- **Electricity Supplier** – Owns the meters embedded within the BNO Network.



## **BNOs responsibilities**

A BNO is responsible for the design, installation and maintenance of the building network and ensuring that the network meets the requirements of Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002\*\* as amended (ESQCR and the IET Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2018 + Amendment 2, 2022– Requirements for Electrical Installations.

The ESQCR sets out specific requirements relating to the safety of the public and general requirements relating to quality and continuity of electricity supply. Links to guidance, published by the Department of Trade and Industry, on the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 [as amended], can be found in the further information section of this guide.

*If there is a fault or issue with the electrical cables, consumer unit/distribution boards, switches or isolators, it is the BNOs responsibility to resolve it.*

*\*\*The Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 - URN 02/1544 published by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/82784/GuidElectSafety\\_Quality.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/82784/GuidElectSafety_Quality.pdf))*

The diagrams on the following pages are examples of typical arrangements of supplies in multi-occupancy buildings (and are not exhaustive), if unsure, discuss with your electrical contractor and/or Distribution Network operator (DNO).



Figure A1: Example of group metering at the electrical intake position/origin.  
Photo courtesy of AMD Electrical

# KEY: (RESPONSIBILITIES)

- DNO
- Meter Operator
- BNO
- Premises owner/tenant
- Switched-fuse or circuit-breaker
- ISO

Figure A2: Group metering at the intake position  
(SMALL DEVELOPMENT)

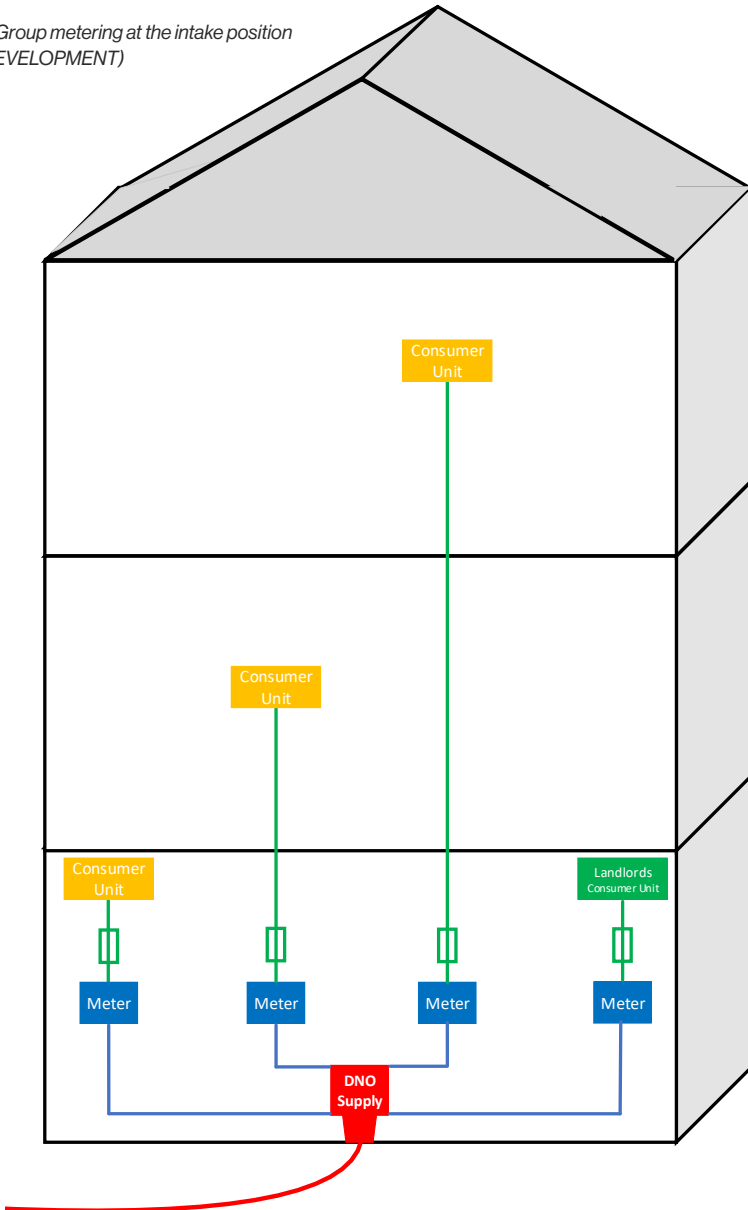


Figure A3: Group metering at the intake position

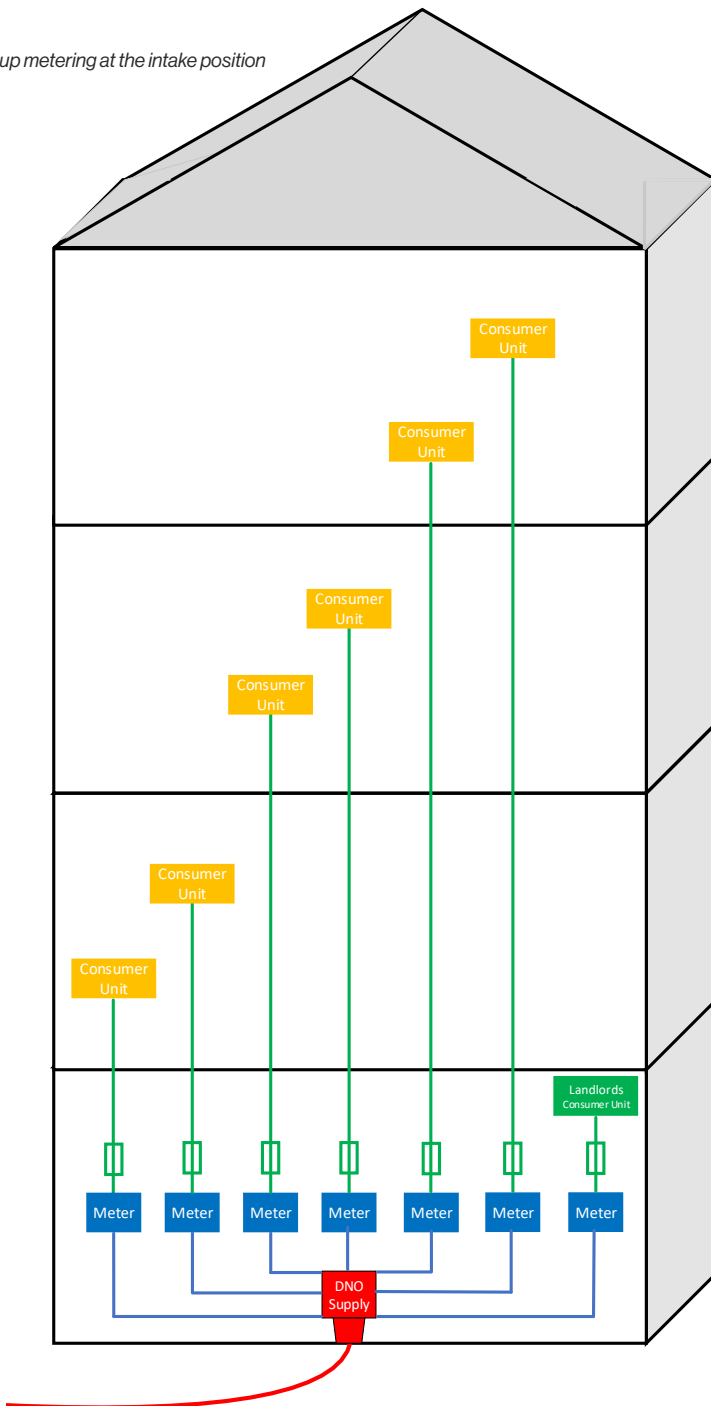
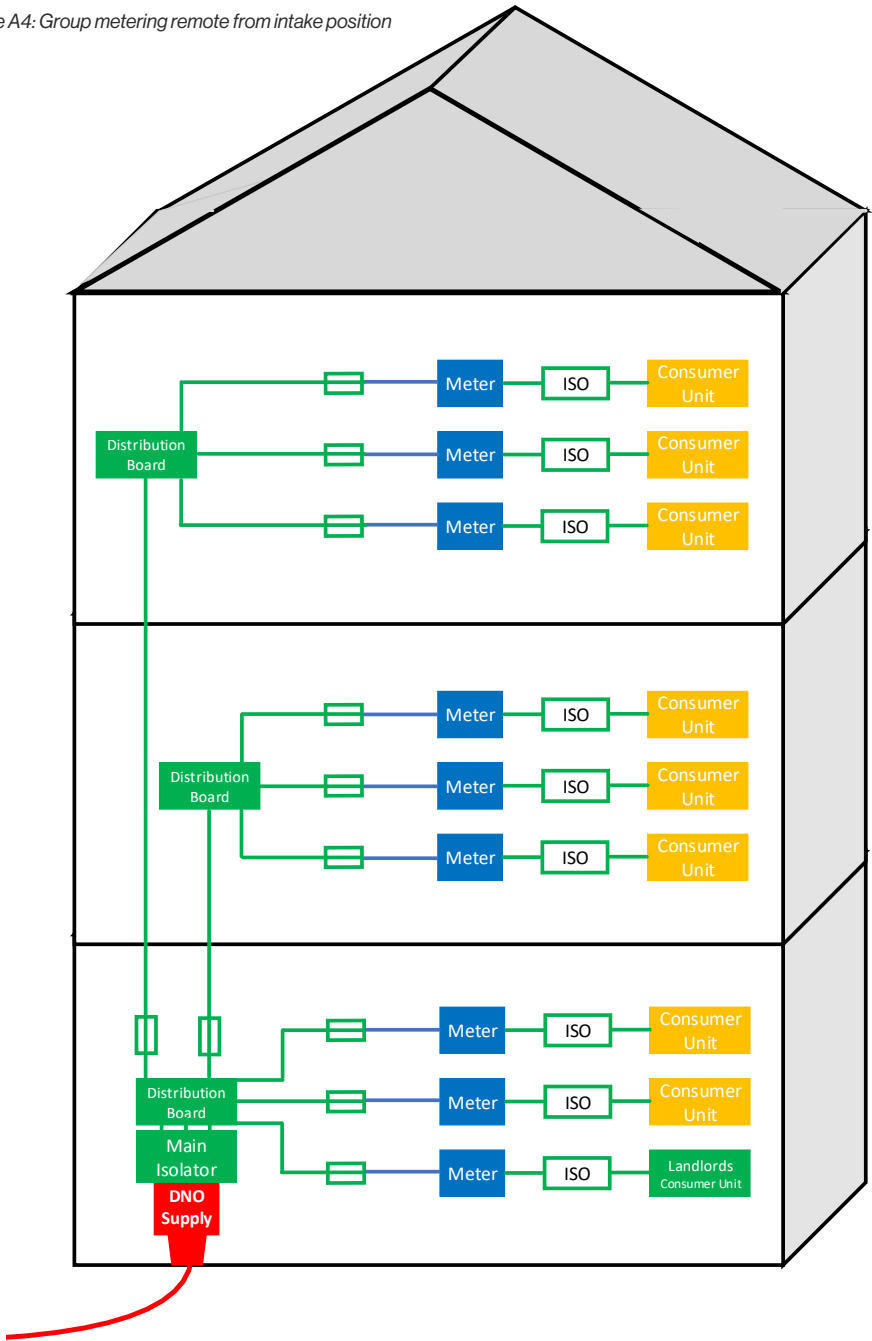




Figure A4: Group metering remote from intake position







**Electrical  
Safety**  
First

## FIND OUT MORE

### ELECTRICAL

For more information about electrical safety visit: [www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

### FIRE SAFETY

For information about fire safety visit:  
[www.gov.uk/firekills](http://www.gov.uk/firekills)



**Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely.**

**45 Great Guildford Street, London, SE1 0ES**  
**Helpline: 020 3463 5100**  
**Email: [enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)**

Registered Charity (Scotland) No. SC039990.  
Registered Charity (England and Wales)  
No.257376 © Electrical Safety First,  
November 2024