

IMPROVING CONSUMER SAFETY ONLINE

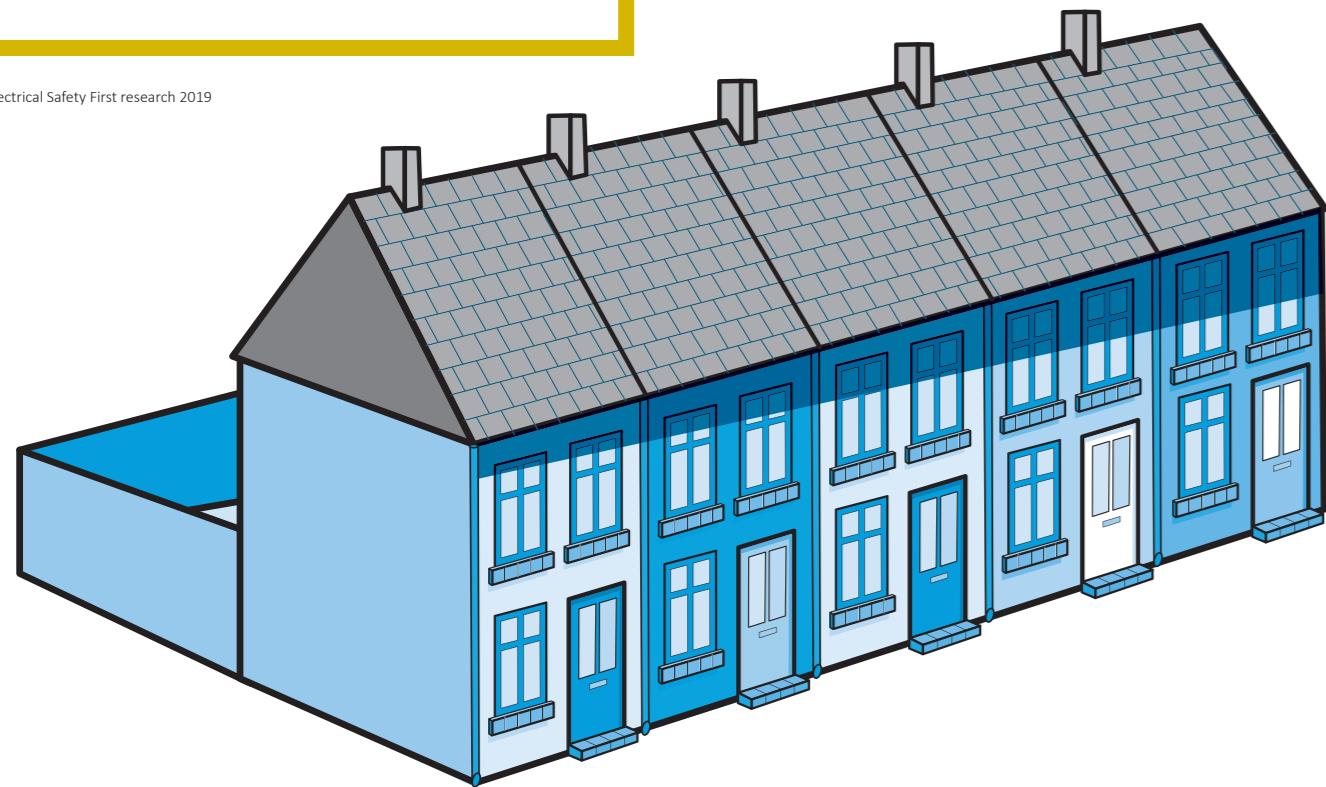
In Wales, whilst the laws relating to relegating unsafe electrical goods are not devolved, it is important to note that there are many issues with Welsh consumers buying unsafe electrical goods online.

According to our research, just over one in four Welsh residents, 26%, admitted that they would knowingly buy something fake or substandard online if they saw it for a fraction of the price and one in 11 Welsh adults have first-hand experience of a shock or fire caused by an electrical product that was bought online.^{iv}

WE WANT TO SEE:

- ✓ Joined up consumer campaigns in Wales to raise awareness of potential risks associated with electrical goods being purchased from online marketplaces.
- ✓ Support given to Trading Standards in Wales to intercept and take enforcement action against unsafe electrical goods being sold in Wales.
- ✓ Welsh Government support for a Bill in the UK Parliament in order to prevent the sale of unsafe, substandard and counterfeit electrical goods.

^{iv} Electrical Safety First research 2019



THE FUTURE USE OF ELECTRICITY

Welsh homes are now using electricity in many different ways than they did even 10 years ago. Increased charging of electronic items, the rise of electric vehicle use and increased usage of electricity for heating are some of the things that we need to consider when improving homes, street infrastructure and assessing whether individual homes in Wales, some of which are amongst the oldest in the UK, are capable to meet the challenges of modern living.

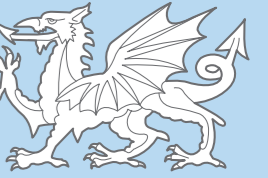
WE WANT TO SEE:

- ✓ A review of whether the housing stock in large urban areas is up to modern safety standards and able to meet an increased use of electricity.
- ✓ More charging points for electric vehicles in public places in Wales, especially in residential areas.

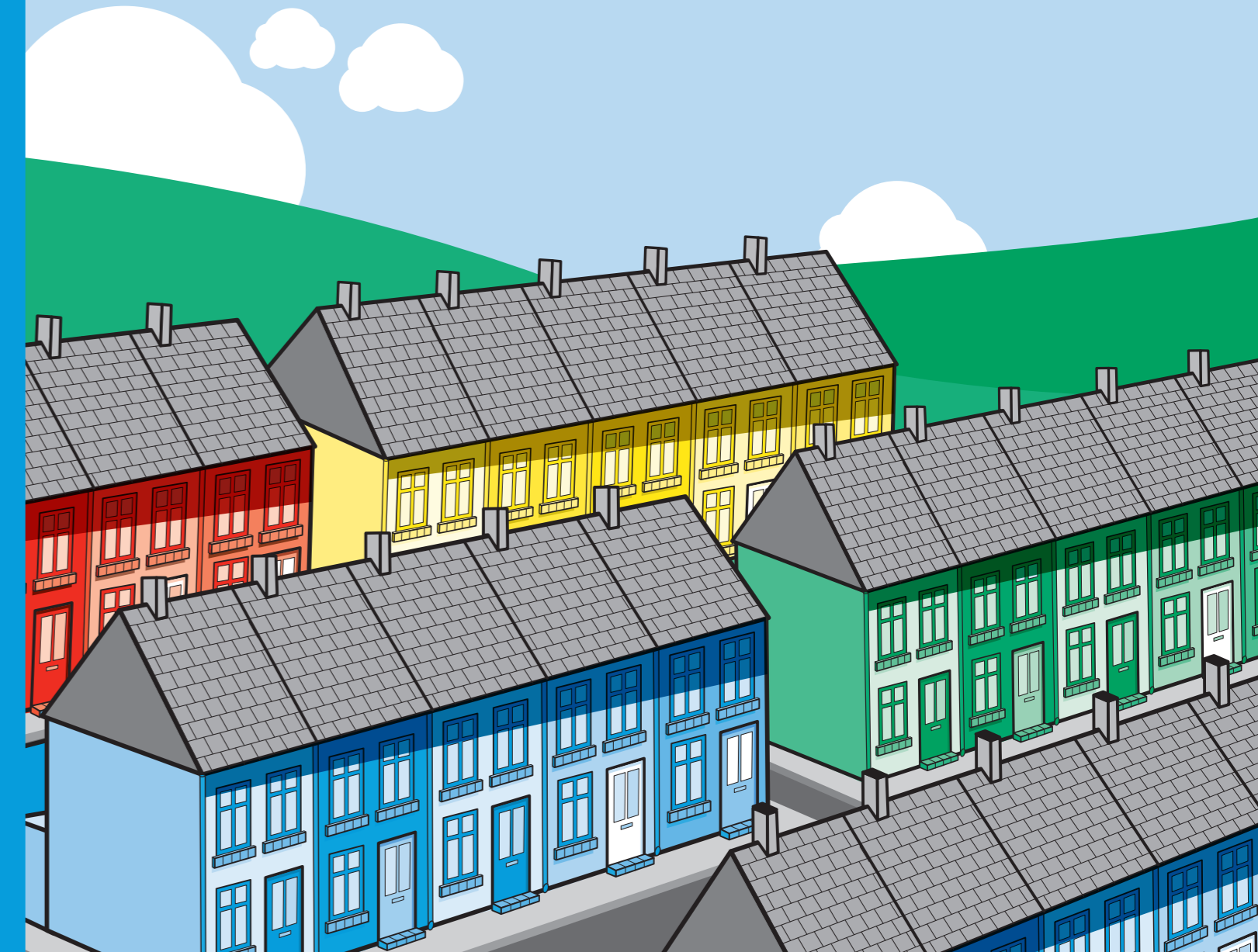


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Electrical Safety First



ELECTRICAL SAFETY FIRST-
PROVIDING SOLUTIONS FOR WALES TO
KEEP PEOPLE SAFE FROM ELECTRICAL
ACCIDENTS AND FIRES



ELECTRICAL SAFETY FIRST IN WALES

Electrical Safety First is the consumer charity dedicated to preventing deaths, injuries and fires caused by electricity in Wales. Our aim is to ensure everyone can use electricity safely in their homes.

We are recognised by the Welsh Government and industry as the leading campaigning charity and technical authority on electrical safety in the home.

To achieve this we:

- Lobby and advise the Welsh Government, Fire & Rescue Services and other partners on improving policy on electrical safety throughout Wales.
- Campaign on behalf of Welsh consumers to improve safety regulations and ensure safety messages are appropriate, up-to-date and well communicated.
- Hold an annual 'Welsh Electrical Safety week' with our partners in Wales, dedicated to raising the profile of using electricity safely in Welsh Homes.
- Work with tenants, landlords and homeowners to reduce deaths and accidents in Welsh homes.
- Provide expert information and advice to help people protect themselves from unsafe, recalled, counterfeit and substandard electrical goods, particularly those sold via online marketplaces.

OUR POLICY FOCUS FOR WALES

- Reducing the number of fires caused by electricity in Welsh homes.
- Improving electrical safety across all housing tenures – privately and socially rented homes and the owner occupied sector.
- Lobbying for a review of Home Safety Visits on how they identify electrical problems and making sure that they are appropriately reported and referred to Care & Repair Agencies in Wales.
- Campaigning to protect the most vulnerable home owners to ensure they have access to resources to improve electrical safety in their homes.
- Raising awareness with Welsh Consumers of the risks associated with buying electrical goods from online marketplaces.
- Advising councils in Wales who sell second hand electrical goods to the public to ensure it is undertaken safely with adequate checks.
- Improving access to public charging points for electric vehicles in Wales.

PREVENTING FIRES CAUSED BY ELECTRICITY IN WALES

Wales has a higher proportion of electrical fires caused by electricity than other parts of the UK. In Wales, 62% of all accidental domestic fires are electrical, compared to 53% in England.ⁱ

BETWEEN 2014-2019, THERE HAVE BEEN

4,000

FIRES CAUSED BY AN ELECTRICAL SOURCE OF IGNITION AND 1,500 CAUSED BY WHITE GOODS, SUCH AS TUMBLE DRYERS, DISHWASHERS AND WASHING MACHINES.ⁱⁱ

WE WANT TO SEE:

- ✓ An ongoing commitment from the Welsh Government to support Welsh Electrical Safety Week – which takes place annually in late November.
- ✓ Backing from the Welsh Government to undertake regular consumer campaigns in the Welsh media to raise awareness that electricity does cause fires in Welsh homes.
- ✓ Improving the reporting of electrical misuse in Welsh homes, such as fires caused by the charging of electronic equipment.
- ✓ A campaign to ensure people in Wales are aware of unsafe electrical goods sold online.

PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

The number of people in Wales aged over 80 is expected to double by 2035 with an estimated 50,000 people aged 65+ living with dementia, which presents its own challenges when it comes to electrical safety.ⁱⁱⁱ Home Safety Visits undertaken by the Fire Services in Wales are a vital tool to help prevent electrical fires.

AN ESTIMATED

50,000

PEOPLE AGED 65+ LIVING WITH DEMENTIA BY 2035

WE WANT TO SEE:

- ✓ A review of how Home Safety Visits prioritise and resolve electrical safety issues in Welsh homes.
- ✓ The Welsh Government consider a disrepair scheme to fund electrical safety improvements and checks in vulnerable people's homes in Wales.
- ✓ Every household with a person over 80 receive a free electrical safety check.
- ✓ Home Safety Visits that identify electrical problems to be referred to Care & Repair agencies for people unable to afford improvements with funding in place to resolve any issues.

KEEPING WELSH HOMES SAFE

We continue to campaign to ensure that people who live in the Privately Rented and Social Rented Sectors in Wales receive five-yearly electrical safety checks.

The Welsh Government has committed to introduce regulations through the Renting Homes (Wales) Act, but we want to ensure that these regulations are brought into effect as soon as possible.

WE WANT TO SEE:

- ✓ Mandatory electrical safety checks introduced in Wales in both the private and social rented sectors.
- ✓ Publication of a roadmap on when these checks will be introduced.
- ✓ A campaign strategy to make the Welsh public aware of these safety improvements.

ⁱ Electrical Safety First methodology and analysis - April 2020
ⁱⁱ Electrical Safety First methodology and analysis

ⁱⁱⁱ Electrical Safety First Report with Swansea University – "How can we keep older people in Wales safe?" <https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/what-we-do/safer-homes-wales/>