



Langstane Housing Association
Gas Safety and Servicing Policy

Senior management team approval:	23 November 2017
Board / Committee	Board of Management
Approval date:	15 January 2018
Implementation date:	15 January 2018
Review date:	15 January 2021
Version:	V3

Policy Version	Date of Approval	Changes made to Policy
V1	-	New policy
V2	-	-
V3	15 January 2018	SMT amendments

1. Introduction

Langstane Housing Association Ltd (LHA) is committed to maintaining the health and safety of residents, employees and members of the public.

The risks in relation to gas supplies are significant, from either the risk of fire/explosion or from the incomplete combustion arising out of poor maintenance. The Association will take all reasonable steps to ensure that residents, employees and members of the public are not put at risk from the effects of gas or carbon monoxide¹.

The Association has 2383 (November 2017) properties with gas supplies which require to be maintained and serviced annually.

2. Policy statement

The Gas Servicing policy aims to ensure that there is an effective and robust approach to compliance in relation to the Association's legislative and regulatory landlord obligations, providing customers and the Scottish Housing Regulator with the necessary reassurance in terms of gas safety requirements.

3. Objective

The objective of the policy is to ensure that all gas systems within the Association's control are properly managed and operate safely and that all new installations, maintenance and safety checks are carried out in accordance with the Association's duty as a landlord and as required by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

4. Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Policy
- Response Repairs Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Procurement Strategy and Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Gas Safety and Servicing Procedures

¹ Carbon Monoxide (CO) is produced by the incomplete burning of natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). This happens when a gas appliance has been incorrectly fitted, badly repaired or poorly maintained. It can also occur if flues, chimneys or vents are blocked.

Oil and solid fuels such as coal, wood, petrol and oil can also produce carbon monoxide.

CO poisoning occurs when gas is inhaled and it replaces oxygen in the bloodstream. Even small amounts of the gas can cause CO poisoning, and long term effects can include paralysis and brain damage.

5. Policy

5.1. Legislative and Regulatory Requirements

The Association has a number of legal obligations it must adhere to and although not exhaustive the Association will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations, including:

- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Gas Safety Regulations 2013
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing Scotland Act 2014
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Occupiers Liability Act (Scotland) 1980
- Building (Scotland) Act 2003

Legislation and Regulations prescribe Langstane's specific landlord responsibilities in terms of gas servicing and gas safety. As a landlord, the Association is required to:

- Carry out annual safety checks within a 12 month period. To ensure compliance the Association works on an annual safety check cycle of 10 months
- Ensure that all gas appliances (in the Association's ownership) flues and gas installation pipe work are maintained in a safe condition. This also applies to the safe fitting of gas installations in new build properties as well as the replacement of installations through planned or reactive maintenance work.
- Keep all records for a minimum of two years
- Give a copy of the landlord's Safety Certificate to the tenants within 28 days of the safety check
- Ensure that all new tenants are given a copy of the Safety Certificate prior to occupancy
- Ensure that any work carried out on the Association's behalf is carried out by a Gas Safe Engineer

In terms of the Scottish Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to housing maintenance by which it will measure landlord performance, including:

- **Quality of housing:** that tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated and also meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) by December 2020.
- **Repairs, maintenance and improvements:** that tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.
- **Value for money:** that tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

In addition the Association will:

- Take positive steps to inform and listen to customers about continuous improvements to the gas maintenance service
- Collect and use business intelligence in relation to the condition of the housing stock and demonstrate that this is being used to make informed financial decisions to maintain and improve stock
- Invest in a programme of testing every 12 months (10 months on the basis that this gives the Association scope to address non-compliance and that timely and appropriate action can be taken if access is not gained)
- Upgrade appliances owned by the Association in accordance with Asset Management's best practice and recommendations from manufacturers
- Engage a technical Gas Safe qualified engineer or consultant to undertake a number of audits to satisfy the Association that the main contractor is maintaining the highest of standards
- Provide advice and information to tenants in relation to fire and carbon monoxide safety
- Test, fit or replace appliances where these are provided as part of either Regulations and / or the lease agreement and carry out remedial work to ensure that tenants' homes are safe in terms of legislative requirements
- Continuously monitor performance in relation to gas safety
- Have clear, regularly reviewed procedures to ensure that systems are in place to enable the Association to comply with its duties in relation to gas servicing
- Operate an effective gas servicing monitoring system, including audit trails and reporting systems that ensure compliance with the gas servicing process
- Maintain the Association's housing stock in accordance with the relevant and applicable legal requirements and the responsibilities set out in the tenancy agreement

5.2. Roles and Responsibility

The Association employs a contractor who is registered under the Gas Safe engineers programme to carry out the appropriate checks to ensure gas safety. The Association also engages a fully qualified gas auditor to ensure the Association's gas servicing contractor is meeting its contractual obligations and gas systems are safe.

The Business Plan also reflects that gas servicing is a key landlord responsibility. The Association seeks to mitigate against business risk through managing gas maintenance services in an efficient, effective and economic way.

Function/Task	Responsibility
Overall duty to ensure the organisation has sufficient resource and systems in place to achieve and maintain statutory compliance	Chief Executive
Gas Safety and Servicing Policy – review, amendment and approval	Director of Housing and Social Justice is responsible for making recommendations to Board for approval
Overall responsibility for delivering statutory compliance	Director of Housing and Social Justice and Director of Asset Management
Responsibility for day-to-day delivery of the policy, gas compliance, reviewing policy and procedure regularly for associated teams and reviewing budget to ensure financial resources available	Property Services Manager and Asset Manager
Responsible for day to day maintenance / compliance of the database	Property Services team leader and Senior Technical Officer Asset Management
Responsible for the servicing, remedial work and installations of new heating systems using a safe method of working and ensuring compliance with gas safety regulations	Gas Servicing Contractor.

The Operational Services Committee will receive regular updates on the compliance with the Gas Servicing Policy so that reassurance is provided that it is operating effectively in practice. Serious incidents will be notified to the Board of Management as part of the Scottish Housing Regulator's notifiable event requirements.

5.3. Administration

Langstane's property database will be routinely updated to ensure that all properties that require gas servicing are clearly identified. This is robustly supported with Gas Safety and Servicing Procedures to give clear guidelines to staff on operational processes. The Property Services Manager will ensure that competent contractors are instructed to service gas installations within the timescales prescribed.

5.4. Responsibility for Appliances

The Association is not responsible for the repair or servicing of residents / tenants' cookers.

Where the gas safety contractor identifies that the tenant has their own gas cooker (or other appliance) the contractor will carry out a visual inspection and where this is identified as unsafe the contractor will terminate the supply and make recommendations for the required rectification works. The Association reserves the right to rectify any damage that is caused to the gas system in the property and recharge the tenant for any remedial work carried out.

The Association will be responsible for any gas appliances they own and will keep a register of appliances and maintain gas safety check records.

5.5. Contractor Management

- All appointed gas safety contractors shall be registered with Gas Safe
- All contractors working with Oil, Solid fuel and Commercial appliances will also be competent to do so.
- All services / works relating to gas appliances (e.g. installation of new heating systems, annual safety checks) will be procured in line with Langstane's Procurement Policy, procedure and legislation.
- Contractors will comply with Langstane's Contractor Code of Conduct.

6. Gas Safety Checks

Carrying out regular safety checks is fundamentally important to the Association's overall commitment to gas safety. A valid certificate is issued when a property meets the requirements of the Landlord Gas Safety Record, and a certificate is issued (widely known as a CP 12). If a property does not have a valid certificate and a gas appliance is faulty, the Association is held responsible. The courts will consider whether or not the Landlord has done everything reasonable to gain access to carry out the safety check.

Gas appliance(s) that fail the safety check will be isolated and the tenant instructed not to use the appliance until it can be repaired or replaced by a competent contractor. If a tenant has a gas supply, but does not use it or has no credit on their meter, the Association will cap the supply until such time as the tenant is able to use their gas supply and contacts the Association to request a reconnection. If the gas connection is live, the Association will reconnect the supply. In addition, if a tenant fails to allow access within the expiry date of the gas safety certificate, the gas supply will be capped.

6.1. Reactive repairs

Gas repairs are reported to the Association and a Gas Safe contractor appointed to undertake the repairs on behalf of the Association within the allocated response time.

6.2. New Developments

Gas safety certificates for newly constructed properties will be passed to Property Services with an accompanying schedule. These will be in hard copy backed up with electronic copies saved to the electronic shared drives of the Association. This information will then be passed to the Association's Gas Safe contractor to add to their database before properties are out with defect period.

6.3. Voids and mutual exchanges

All void properties where there is an existing gas supply will have a gas safety check carried out before re-letting.

All tenants undergoing a mutual exchange will have a gas safety check carried out in their property on the day of exchange. The housing officer overseeing the exchange will ensure this is booked with a Gas Safe contractor via the property services assistant.

6.4. Resident installed appliances

Any appliance which has been installed by a previous tenant will be removed before re-letting (and recharged to outgoing tenant for remedial works carried out if applicable). No gas appliance should be gifted to the incoming tenant.

6.5. Access to tenants home for gas safety service

The tenant is responsible for allowing access for the gas safety check. If the Association is unable to make contact with the tenant of a property within the 10 – 11 month period of a gas safety check being carried out forced entry / access will be gained to either carry out the service or cap the supply where appropriate and a re-charge for the cost of entry applied.

7. Service Standards

All contractors will comply with the Contractor code of conduct. All gas repair requests will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate repairs service standard.

8. Monitoring

In terms of gas servicing and safety the Association's property services team will monitor:

- Contractors compliance and performance
- Contractor Health and Safety
- Budgets
- Record keeping

100% of properties with gas appliances will be serviced and have a current CP 12 certificate annually, within the anniversary date.

9. Publicising the Policy

Langstane will publicise the policy on Gas Safety and Servicing to residents and staff in a number of ways:

- Tenant's handbook
- Leaflets
- Tenants' newsletter
- The Association's website
- Policy and briefings
- Training

10. Expected Outcomes

Key outcomes of operating an effective Gas Safety and Servicing Policy include:

- Ensuring compliance with the Association's landlord legislative, regulatory and gas safety duties
- Ensuring that properties are well maintained, safe, secure and in line with SHQS, EESSH and gas Regulations
- Optimising customer satisfaction with the gas maintenance service
- Delivering value for money

Right to complain

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of the Complaints Policy. This can also be viewed on Langstane Housing Association's website – www.langstane-ha.co.uk.

Equality and diversity

The Langstane Group / Langstane Housing Association is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of work. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

If you would like this document sent to you in large print, please contact Support Services on 01224 423000.