



# GAS SAFETY POLICY

# DOCUMENT CONTROL

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## 1. Introduction / Strategic Vision Statement

- 1.1 Gas is used as a fuel for heating and cooking in a significant number of RBH properties and whilst this fuel is efficient and convenient it has associated risks to health & safety if it is not used with appliances that have been regularly checked and maintained. This policy outlines RBH's responsibilities in managing and minimising risks associated with the use of gas to our customers.
- 1.2 RBH has a legal obligation under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations (GSIUR) 1998 to install and maintain gas appliances owned by RBH.
- 1.3 Regulation 36 of the GSIUR requires landlords to ensure that all gas appliances and associated parts and fittings provided by the landlord are maintained in a safe condition requiring the landlord to carry out a safety check at least once every 12 months.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that RBH fulfils all of its legal obligations and adopts robust procedures to guarantee all work is compliant with the relevant legislation and meets the expectation of our customers, the Regulator and the RBH Board.

## 2. Statement of Intent

- 2.1 RBH will comply with regulatory requirements to maintain gas safety in all our homes, we will comply with the highest standards in gas safety and apply working practices that provide safety and wellbeing for all our customers.
- 2.2 RBH recognises the importance of providing efficient and effective processes associated to gas safety, the society ensures all gas related activity is undertaken in the safest possible method that is in accordance with current regulations.
- 2.3 This policy covers all assets owned by the society, including its homes, offices and other buildings. This policy covers activities associated with repairs & maintenance of RBH installed gas appliances, annual gas safety checks and planned maintenance programmes.
- 2.4 The policy has been developed to incorporate and reflect the mutual values of RBH as follows:

**Responsibility** – RBH is completely accountable for ensuring that it has a clear approach to gas safety and takes full responsibility for fulfilling our legal obligations and taking all steps possible to deliver the highest possible standards in gas safety.

**Equity** – As a robust approach to gas safety is a statutory obligation an equality impact assessment has been completed which provides reassurance that the policy is applied consistently across all equality groups .

**Openness & Honesty** – RBH publishes regular performance information detailing how it implements its approach to gas safety so that tenants, employees and members are able to monitor delivery and compliance.

**Caring** – A robust and comprehensive gas safety policy enables RBH to provide an efficient and effective gas maintenance, servicing and installation service which complies with all relevant legislation and regulations and safeguards our tenants and the neighbourhoods in which they live.

### 3. Definitions

- 3.1 *New or Replacement Gas Installations and Heating* - includes the fitting of gas installations in new build properties as well as the replacement of installations through planned or reactive maintenance work. Gas installations cover gas central heating, gas fires as well as gas supply pipe work to feed future gas appliances.
- 3.2 *Landlords Annual Gas Safety Inspection* - is the annual check required by the Gas Safety Regulations on all gas installations. In addition to the safety check the Association will also carry out an annual service on all gas appliances.
- 3.3 *Gas Repairs and Maintenance Work* - are essential day-to-day repairs which are categorised as emergency, urgent and routine repair works which cannot be left to the next cycle of programmed or planned maintenance without posing a threat to the safety or health of the customer, the home or RBH's repair obligations. Day-to-day repairs are mostly reported by customers or arise from empty property inspections carried out by the society.
- 3.4 *Change of Tenancy Gas Safety Checks* - are checks carried out at the start of a new tenancy or mutual exchange.
- 3.5 *Gas Appliance Register* – is the tool used by RBH to record and monitor the annual servicing programme. Alternative databases are used to record repairs & maintenance and RBH's planned maintenance programme activity.

### 4. General Principles

- 4.1 RBH will provide efficient and effective gas maintenance and servicing to ensure all RBH gas appliances and fittings are in a safe condition.
- 4.2 RBH will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations in accordance with our landlord responsibilities as set out in the Tenancy Agreement.

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- 4.3 RBH will maintain accurate records to monitor compliance with procedures and legal requirements.
- 4.4 RBH may enter into management or lease agreement with another housing provider or recognised body. For any new agreements the responsibility for gas and other regulatory requirements will be clearly defined in the agreement.
- 4.6 Performance against targets and management of risk in relation to gas safety will be reported to the Customer Management Team, Heads of Service and the RBH Board on a regular basis and by exception outside of the agreed timetable of reporting should there be any requirement to do so.

## **5. Legal Framework**

- 5.1 The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 set out the requirements for the landlord (RBH) to inspect and service gas installations on an annual basis and to only allow qualified and approved gas engineers to work on any gas appliances or installations.
- 5.2 These sit within the wider context of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 5.3 RBH's specific responsibilities are to ensure that all RBH gas appliances and associated fittings are maintained in a safe condition. RBH must also keep records for a minimum of two years and provide a copy of the Landlords Safety Certificate to the customer(s) within 28 days of a safety check.
- 5.4 RBH will ensure that the person who undertakes a gas repair or a service visit will be a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- 5.5 RBH has legal obligations to maintain the safety and wellbeing of our customers and this policy adheres to the following legal documents:
  - 5.5.1 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
  - 5.5.2 Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
  - 5.5.3 Gas Safety Management Regulations 1996
  - 5.5.4 Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007
  - 5.5.5 Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
  - 5.5.6 Housing Act 1985
  - 5.5.7 Technical bulletins from Gas Safe (as and when they are published).
  - 5.5.8 Homes and Communities Agency regulatory standards – Home standard

## **6. Selection & Appointments of Contractors**

- 6.1 RBH directly employ Gas Safe engineers for routine and emergency maintenance in addition to the annual servicing programme, for larger gas related replacement programmes contractors may be appointed for the duration of the work programme.
- 6.2 When RBH appoints a (gas) contractor we will make sure that any person who is employed by the contractor is Gas Safe registered.
- 6.3 Before a contract is awarded, checks will be made to determine the quality and extent of the contractor's competence. This process will establish the contractor's ability to carry out gas work in a safe and competent manner, as a minimum, all contractors will provide a copy of their current Gas Safe registration, copies of all of their gas engineers' registration and gas qualifications and provide necessary insurances and indemnities.

## **7. New or Replacement Gas Installations and Heating**

- 7.1 RBH has a continuous programme of replacing gas installations (boilers etc.) when they have reached the end of their efficient lifecycle or if the product(s) are no longer viable to repair and maintain. When an RBH home is due to be refurbished a contractor or directly employed Gas Safe engineers will undertake the work and the work will be monitored and where necessary inspected by an RBH gas qualified officer.
- 7.2 Following the completion of (gas) refurbishment work to an RBH home a completion/commissioning certificate for each property will be signed by an approved engineer. The certification will confirm that the installation has been: -
- 7.3 Installed as per the manufacturer's instruction and in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998 and installed by a competent person.  
  
And
- 7.4 The system has been fully commissioned in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements and that the following checks have been carried out and recorded: -
  - 7.4.1 The effectiveness of any flue.
  - 7.4.2 The adequate supply of combustion air.
  - 7.4.3 The operating pressure and/or heat input.
  - 7.4.4 That it is operating safely.

## **8. Landlords Annual Gas Safety Check**

- 8.1 Regulation 36 of the Gas Safety Installation and Use Regulations 1998 (“GSIUR”) places a legal duty on the landlord (RBH) regarding gas safety. RBH is required to ensure any appliances owned by RBH are maintained and checked for safety at no more than 12 monthly intervals and customers are provided with a copy of the record of the safety check within 28 days of the appliance being checked and that RBH keeps the record for a minimum of 2 years (landlords gas safety record).
- 8.2 Regulation 35 of the GSIUR places duties on employers to ensure that any gas appliances installed in any building that they control are maintained in a safe condition.
- 8.3 To ensure compliance with the duties above RBH operate a rolling programme of landlord’s gas safety checks and service each gas appliance in line with manufacturer’s instructions. This programme is based on a 10 month rolling cycle and includes all homes identified within RBH’s gas servicing database as having a gas appliance for which RBH has a servicing or maintenance responsibility.
- 8.4 The gas servicing database is reconciled with the housing management system on a monthly basis in order to identify any properties which require adding to the programme, for example new build and buy back scheme properties.
- 8.5 The gas safety records will be processed electronically and stored within the gas servicing database for easy retrieval. A hard copy will be issued to the customer within 28 days of the servicing taking place.
- 8.6 RBH adopts a robust procedure in order to gain access to its homes requiring a gas safety check, this includes a number of engineer visits, letters sent and other attempts to make contact and where this is not successful a referral process commences to the neighbourhood and rents teams to share information and intelligence and agree the preferred option for gaining access to undertake the gas safety check.
- 8.7 We will consider each tenancy where we are unable to gain access on an individual basis and determine the most appropriate course of action to ensure compliance. This will include consideration of action through the county courts in the form of injunction, possession applications and the use of enforced access including the changing of locks to gain access as detailed in section 7.12 C of the tenancy agreement, where the landlords gas safety certificate expires within the next seven days and the customer has not allowed access to allow the check to be completed, this action will follow the completion of a risk assessment process. RBH will ensure that it takes all actions that are reasonably practical to gain access and that any actions are taken in a timely manner.



## **9. Gas Repairs & Maintenance**

- 9.1 RBH are responsible for the repair and maintenance to gas appliances, associated pipework and fittings owned by RBH, all customer reported repairs will be responded to in accordance with the timescales set out in the RBH Repair Policy and on the RBH website.
- 9.2 RBH directly employs its own Gas Safe engineers and in most cases an RBH engineer will undertake the repair, customers should always ask for proof of identity before allowing anyone into their home.

## **10. Change of Tenancy & Gas Checks**

- 10.1 When a customer starts a new tenancy RBH has a statutory duty to ensure that all relevant gas fittings are safe for use. The gas supply will, at the commencement of the tenancy, remain capped at the meter and when the new customer has arranged their own gas supplier, RBH will attend the home to re connect the gas supply, service any relevant gas appliances and carry out a landlord's gas safety check.
- 10.2 A copy of the landlord's gas safety check will be issued to the customer and RBH will retain a copy for a period of not less than 2 years.
- 10.3 When a mutual exchange takes place RBH has the same statutory duty to ensure that any gas fitting or appliances are safe to use before the customer moves into their new home. RBH will service all relevant gas fittings and carry out a landlord's gas safety check. A copy of the landlord's gas safety record will be issued to the customer and RBH will retain a copy of the record for a period of not less than 2 years.

## **11. Gas Appliance Register**

- 11.1 A gas servicing database is maintained by RBH and this contains a register of all RBH homes, including homes leased or managed by another provider or recognised body, that contain a gas appliance owned by RBH. This database is reviewed and updated on a monthly basis to ensure the property list remains accurate.
- 11.2 A record of completed and outstanding gas related repairs and maintenance is maintained within RBH's core housing management system.
- 11.3 RBH maintains an asset management register that records data associated to planned maintenance programmes both current and historical.

## **12. Roles & Responsibilities**

- 12.1 The Chief Executive retains the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 12.2 The Director of Customer Services is responsible for ensuring adequate resources are made available for the objects of the policy to be met.
- 12.3 RBH directly employs gas maintenance and servicing teams which are under the management of the Head of Customer Experience. These teams are responsible for undertaking the roles and responsibilities detailed within this policy and associated procedures.
- 12.4 A new installation undertaken during a new development or planned refurbishment programme is the responsibility of the Director of Communities and the Technical Manager.
- 12.5 The lead responsibility for data quality including the maintenance of a definitive stock list will be undertaken on a monthly basis by the Business Intelligence Analyst.

## **13. Equality and Diversity**

- 13.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken and it was identified that RBH has an awareness of its vulnerable customers and incorporates flexibility within its procedures and response time to ensure customers with known vulnerabilities receive a faster response to reports of no heating during certain times of the year. This action is considered justified and does not contradict any of its core values.

## **14. Monitoring**

- 14.1 Monitoring of this policy for compliance and effectiveness will be undertaken at regular intervals throughout the year by a number of different means.
- 14.2 This monitoring will include:
- The gas servicing team is involved in all projects with gas servicing implications to ensure that relevant issues are identified at an early stage.
  - Monitoring information including performance against targets and management of risk in relation to gas safety will be reported to the Customer Management Team and Heads of Service on a monthly basis. This will be supplemented by exception reporting outside of the agreed timetable should there be any requirement to do so.

- Monthly monitoring will also take place at the Repairs Team Meeting.
- The RBH Board receive a gas servicing performance report each month.

14.3 RBH will invite tenants to engage in the monitoring of the Gas Safety Policy by reporting performance to the Homes Panel and will seek customer feedback through tenant consultation and surveys.

## 15. **Review**

15.1 RBH policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.

15.2 This policy, including any other related procedures will be reviewed annually by the Head of Customer Experience in order to ensure its continued appropriateness and formally reviewed and submitted to EMT for approval every three years.

## 16. **Links with other RBH Strategies and Policies**

- Asset management register / programme
- Asbestos Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Repairs Policy
- Annual Gas Servicing Access Procedure
- Tenancy Agreement