

Policy on:	Gas Safety - Draft
Compliant with Charter Outcomes and Standards:	Yes
Compliant with Equalities:	Yes – Equalities Impact Assessment Undertaken
Compliant with Business Plan:	Yes
Compliant with Risk:	Yes
Equalities Impact Assessment Completed as part of Review	Yes
Date for Approval:	25th September 2023
Date for Review:	25th September 2028 <i>*5 Years or legislation/ best practice change</i>
Responsible Officers:	Asset Manager

This policy is available, on request, in different languages and in other formats such as large print, audio format and braille as required.



1. Introduction

To fulfil our vision of Great Homes, Great People and Vibrant Communities, Shire Housing Association is committed to putting our customers at the heart of what we do and how we do it.

We have developed this policy to outline the principles that will be used by Shire to deliver gas safety across our stock portfolio and ensure safety compliance for our tenants and stakeholders.

This policy aims to consider the standards and outcomes set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter that describe the results that tenants and others who use our services can expect from Shire. The relevant standards and outcomes for the activity of providing gas safety are detailed in Section 4 “roles and responsibilities” below. We will use these to measure our performance and to be accountable to our customers.

2. Aims and Objectives

Shire recognises that delivery of gas safety across our houses, offices and other buildings is paramount in the assurance of current legislation and good practice.

Shire is committed to the principles of good corporate governance and sustainability in the delivery of this service through fair and consistent policy, procedure, and practice.

Shire aims:

- To ensure all of our gas installations and appliances are operated and maintained in a safe and useable condition.
- To provide a prompt, efficient and effective service which is also sympathetic to the customer’s needs.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations and to ensure our gas installations and appliances are maintained in accordance with the landlord responsibilities set out in our tenancy agreements.
- To clearly define the levels and standards of service for the installation and maintenance of gas systems and appliances.
- To ensure that the works carried out through this policy are undertaken safely, effectively, efficiently and in compliance with recognised good practice.
- To have in place an effective monitoring system of both staff and contractor’s performance.



- To exercise tenant and resident consultation by encouraging them to monitor the service and provide constructive feedback.
- To have appropriate procedures in place to ensure the aims of this policy are implemented.
- To report regularly to the Management Board on performance, costs, and other relevant issues.

3. Legislation, Regulations, Guidance, Strategies and Policies

In formulating and implementing this Policy, Statutory Requirements, Performance Standards and Good Practice have been incorporated. Legislation relevant to this Policy includes:

- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and 2018 Amendment Regulations.
- Approved Code of Practice L56, Safety in The Installation and Use of Gas Systems and Appliances.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 as amended

4. Roles and Responsibilities

In relation to Gas Safety Management, the principle responsibilities are:

The Asset Management Team has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of gas safety. This includes gas systems installed and maintained in compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

The Asset Manager will therefore have overall responsibility for gas safety and will identify specific responsibilities within the team. The Asset Manager will also ensure that procedures are in place and that resources are made available to provide training to staff to enable them to fulfil their duties in relation to gas safety.

The Asset Manager will ensure that contractual arrangements are made with qualified and competent contractors to carry out gas installations, servicing, safety inspections and reactive repairs that comply with all current legislation and good practice.

The installation of new or replacement of existing gas systems and appliances in our existing properties should be organised through The Asset Management Team. However, should any other department directly commission any gas related work the terms of this policy must be followed.

4.1 Gas Servicing



Annual safety checks must be carried out on all appliances every 12 months to comply with the current legislation. To ensure we meet these demands we work on a 10-month cycle for safety checks. The process to carry out the next safety check will be started 10 months after the date of the previous safety check and follow a robust non-access procedure that will ensure that the safety check will be completed within the required 12-month period.

A robust non-access procedure is in place to cover the non-access process. This process will allow for up to 3 attempted appointments/visits to be made to each property to carry out the safety check and service.

On the 3rd visit if access is not provided the gas supply will be capped where the meter is external. For properties with internal meters entry will be forced to allow the safety check and service to proceed. If access is gained on the 3rd visit but no live gas or electric supply is available due to lack of credit in the meter or for any other reason, then the gas supply will be capped to make it safe.

Once credit is obtained the tenant will be required to contact us to have the gas uncapped and the safety check and service completed before they will be able to use the gas system in the property.

Where a vulnerable tenant has been identified, additional measures will be considered depending on the circumstances. This may include offering the use of temporary heaters for a reasonable period after the gas supply is capped to allow the safety check to be carried out.

The appointed contractors will provide a programme at least two months before service visits are due. We will check to ensure it complies with the policy and procedure timescales and includes all appropriate properties.

The safety check will be carried out in accordance with the current regulations by a qualified and approved engineer. On completion the engineer will issue a Safety Check Certificate. The certificate will record the required statutory information and any additional information required under the contract. This will be issued to us and a copy left in the property for the tenant.

In receipt of all Safety Check Certificates, we will check for accuracy, file safely and retain on file for a minimum of 3 years from the date of the check.

Daily non-access reports will be provided by the contractor showing all properties where safety checks were scheduled but access was not gained.

Monthly management reports will be prepared to monitor the annual gas safety check programme, the non-access procedure and the contractors' performance in relation to the agreed programme. These reports will monitor the following: -



- Number of Safety Checks due and completed by the anniversary date.
- Number of properties at the second or third visit stage.
- Number of properties passed for legal action.
- Number of properties capped.
- Number of properties having had entry forced
- Contractors' performance in relation to the agreed annual safety check programme.
- Contractors performance in relation to the timescales achieved for arranging second and third visits where required.

4.2 Gas Repair and Maintenance

This applies to all day-to-day repairs required to gas installations or heating systems up to but not including complete replacement of systems or appliances.

Only qualified and competent contractors and engineers will be used.

The appointed contractor will run a call handling service to deal with all daytime and out of hours repairs calls made directly by tenants or through our staff team.

The repairs will be categorised into one of the following four categories. For emergencies and urgent categories, the timescale is from the time of reporting the repair, for all other categories the timescales are from the first working day after the repair is reported.

- Emergency Attend within 4 hrs and repair or make safe.
- RTR 1 – Attend within 24 hours (*Qualifying Repair – see right to repair legislation*)
- Urgent – Attend within 3 days and repair
- Routine – Attend within 5 working days.

In accordance with our approach to continuous improvement the above response times will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The category in which a repair is categorised will be solely determined by us based on the type of work required and the effect the problem is having on the occupants, the property and the availability of parts or materials.

Delays and exemptions to the above timescales may occur in circumstances out with our control or the control of our contractors, such as extreme weather or non-availability of parts and materials, or where the extent of the work is so large that the timescale cannot realistically be achieved. In such cases the response time will be extended to allow for these events. Affected tenants will be notified of any delays or extensions to target timescales as soon as possible.

Flexibility may also be introduced in respect of the above categorisation of work or timescales, particularly



in the case of vulnerable tenants with specific needs. In such cases repairs may be classified with a more urgent timescale or the target timescales for the repair may be reduced. The decision to apply this flexibility will be at our discretion.

For routine repairs where the nature of the repair cannot be determined based on the information provided then a pre-inspection will be carried out before the repair work can be instructed. If this is required, then the target timescale for the work will be extended by the time needed to carry out the pre-inspection.

In all other respects gas installation and appliance maintenance will be in accordance with our Reactive Maintenance Policy.

4.3 Void Property Gas Safety

A gas safety check will be carried out on the gas installation and any appliances owned by us prior to the start of each new tenancy.

Only qualified and competent contractors and engineers will be used.

Safety checks will be completed within the prescribed timescales outlined in the contract. The engineers will complete the appropriate certificate outlined in regulations and the contract prior to submission to us.

The timescale will only be deemed to have been met once the completed Safety Check Certificate is received by us along with any keys issued to the competent person.

The tenants' copy of the completed Safety Check Certificate will be passed to the Housing Team for issuing to the new tenant at allocation.

Properties with gas installations will not be allocated without a current gas safety certificate.

4.4 New or Replacement Gas Installations

Only qualified and competent contractors or sub-contractors will be allowed to carry out installation works.

We will ensure that we receive a completion/commissioning certificate for each property prior to handover and signed by an approved engineer. The certification must confirm that the installation has been: -

- Installed as per the manufacturer's instruction and in accordance with the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998.
- Installed by a competent person.
- The system has been fully commissioned in accordance with the manufacturers requirements.



- Rust inhibitor of suitable concentration has been added to the system.
- That the following checks have been carried out and recorded: -
 - The effectiveness of any flue.
 - The adequate supply of combustion air.
 - The operating pressure and/or heat input.
 - That it is operating safely.

** above as a minimum.*

4.5 Gas Appliance Register

We will hold a central register of gas appliances and service/safety check information. This will detail: -

- A description of the appliance.
- The make, model and where possible the location.
- The date of installation.
- The date of the current safety check.

When appliances are added or replaced, we will update the register accordingly. Installing new or replacing existing gas systems should be done through the Asset Management Team, however, should any other person commission the installation or replacement of appliances they must notify the Asset Team of the changes to enable the register to be updated.

5. Quality Control

Under our gas servicing and maintenance contract it will be a requirement of the appointed contractors to carry out in-house quality control inspections on a percentage of the work per engineer who work on the contract.

The contractors will be required to regularly produce details of the quality control inspections carried out to allow us to monitor that the checks are being done and that any issues identified are being dealt with appropriately.

In addition to the contractor's in-house quality control, the Association will also appoint a qualified gas quality control assessor to do an audit of 10% of all work carried out by the contractors.

These third-party inspections will mainly cover landlords' annual safety checks but will also include an element of replacement installations.

The third-party quality control audit will be done on a regular basis and the results of the inspections and any recommendations that are made will be passed to the gas contractor involved. Where necessary feedback will be obtained from the contractor on any improvement measures, they have implemented to address any



failings or shortcomings identified within the audit report.

6. Funding

The gas servicing and reactive maintenance works will be funded through rental income.

All Gas related improvement works to housing will be funded by the Association through budgeted expenditure or through grant income where applicable.

Gas installations and heating works to non-housing assets will be funded by us through budgeted expenditure.

Where possible, grant funding will be identified and sourced to try and minimise the need to fund the works from the Associations own financial resources.

7. Equality and Diversity

This Policy complies fully with Shire Housing Association' Equality and Diversity Policy. Shire Housing Association will be proactive in valuing and promoting diversity, fairness, social justice, and equality of opportunity by adopting and promoting fair policies and procedures.

We are committed to providing fair and equal treatment for all our stakeholders including customers and will not discriminate against anyone on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment; being married or in a civil partnership; being pregnant or on maternity leave; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

We carry out Equality Impact Assessments when we review our policies. We check policies and associated procedures regularly to ensure accessibility for all. We take appropriate action to address inequalities likely to result or resulting from the implementation of the policy and procedures.

8. Feedback and Complaints

Shire Housing Association strives to always provide an excellent customer service and welcomes feedback and comments from our customers. We will seek feedback via our website, e-mail, in writing and verbally to learn from service users' experiences, using them to shape and develop our service.

We operate a Complaints Policy that is open and transparent, should any customer or service user feel the need to make a complaint against an individual or the organisation, the complaints policy and procedure will be implemented. All complaints will be recorded and dealt with under Complaints Policy and Procedures, which meet the requirements of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

9. Performance Monitoring and Review

In addition to the annual submission of performance against the Annual Return on the Charter to the Scottish



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Housing Regulator, the Management Board will review and approve Key Performance Indicators and targets on an annual basis and outcomes will be monitored at quarterly meetings.

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years or earlier if deemed necessary due to legislative, best practice or other changes.

