



WGHC

Our tenants are paramount in everything we do

GAS SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURES

This policy & procedure was approved by the Committee of Management in February 2022. There was a minor update in November 2023. It should be reviewed again no later than the end of January 2025.

The policy has been assessed through the organisational impact assessment process.

We can, if requested, produce this document in different formats such as larger print or audio-format. We can also translate the document into various languages, as appropriate.

SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR STANDARDS

STANDARD 1

The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.

STANDARD 2

The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. Its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.

STANDARD 3

The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.

STANDARD 4

The Governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.

STANDARD 5

The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.

STANDARD 6

The Governing body and senior officers have the skills and Knowledge they need to be effective.

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West Granton Housing Co-operative Limited is a fully mutual housing co-operative registered as a social landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator (HAC 225); and is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 (2357 RS).



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to ensure that all gas systems within our properties are properly managed and operate safely and that all new installations, maintenance and safety check work is carried out safely and in accordance with our duties as landlords as required by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.

This policy & procedure is intended to cover all assets owned by WGHC, including housing stock and office.

The policy will cover the following works:

- ❖ New or Replacement Gas Installations and Gas Heating.
- ❖ Landlords Annual Gas Safety Inspection.
- ❖ Gas Servicing.
- ❖ Gas Repairs and Maintenance Work.
- ❖ Void Property Gas Safety Checks.

We are committed to sustainable development and will recognise sustainability aims and principles when implementing this policy. This will include, wherever possible, the use of sustainable materials, products and specifications, which will maintain properties to a high standard of energy efficiency.

1.1 Definitions

New or Replacement Gas Installations and Gas 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, gas cookers, ovens or hobs as well as gas supply pipe work to feed future gas appliances.

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 we will also carry out an annual service on all gas appliances which we are responsible for.

Gas Repairs and Maintenance Work is the essential day-to-day repairs which are categorised as either emergency, urgent or routine which cannot be left to the next cycle of programmed or planned maintenance, without posing a threat to the safety or health of the tenant, the property or the landlord's repair obligations. Day-to-day repairs are reactive repairs mostly reported by tenants or arise from re-lets and inspections carried out by us.

Change of Tenancy Gas Safety Checks are checks carried out at the start of a new tenancy either at a change of tenancy or a mutual exchange.

Emergency Repairs covers any situation where works are required to make a property safe, where there is a safety risk to the tenant or members of the public.

Urgent Repairs are works which are not classed as emergencies but which would cause a high degree of unavoidable inconvenience to the tenant and where there is no immediate threat to health, safety or the security of the property.

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This includes a significant loss of heat or hot water or water leaks from the system that could damage the tenant's personal property or property belonging to us. If action can be taken by us or by the tenant in the short term to remove or reduce the major inconvenience, then this would be done and the repair would then follow as a routine category repair.

Routine Repairs are works identified as not being urgent and not causing any immediate danger to the tenant and having no significant effect on heating or hot water output.

Defects are faults occurring with a new building or a major repair or renovation project within the defects liability period of the completed project. This period is generally 1 year but for smaller projects may be less. These faults are generally due to material failures or workmanship issues or other issues within the control of the contractor or developer and so must be put right by them at no additional cost. The full definition of a defect will be found in the conditions of contract for the relevant project.

Gas Safe Registration – Gas Safe Registration or such other registration scheme approved by the Health & Safety Executive for the purposes of showing appropriate qualification and competence under The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.

Contractor refers to all external contractors who carry out gas safety checks, servicing, repairs and maintenance work for WGHC.

2.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- ❖ 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 tenant'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 the 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 and efficiently, in compliance with recognised good practice.
- ❖ To have in place an effective monitoring system of both staff and contractors performance taking into account tenant satisfaction feedback.
- ❖ To exercise tenant consultation, 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 Committee of Management on performance, costs and other relevant issues.

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3.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations set out the requirements for landlords 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. 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.

Under the terms of this legislation, the Landlords specific responsibilities are as follows:

- ❖ To ensure that all gas appliances (in their ownership or adopted by them), flues and gas installation pipe work are maintained in a safe condition.
- ❖ To ensure that all relevant gas fittings receive a safety check every 12 months
- ❖ To keep all records for a minimum of two years.
- ❖ To ensure that any work carried out on our behalf is carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- ❖ To give a copy of the Landlords Safety Certificate to the tenants within 28 days of the safety check.
- ❖ To ensure that all new tenants are given a copy of the Safety Certificate prior to occupancy.

4.0 SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTORS

Only qualified and competent gas contractors and engineers will be allowed to work on or install any of our gas systems and appliances. These companies and engineers must be registered on the Gas Safe Register.

All contractors will be required to show evidence of their Gas Safe Registration where required and provide written confirmation of the Gas Safe Registration for individual engineers that will be working on any of our gas systems. Such written confirmation will also confirm which areas of gas work the individual engineers are qualified and certified to carry out.

Questionnaires will be issued to all new contractors prior to their appointment to gather the above information. WGHC undertake an open tender exercise via Public Contracts Scotland (PCS) to procure a registered gas safe contractor on a 36 or 48 month contract basis.

4.1 New or Replacement Gas Installations and Heating

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 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.

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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.

5.0 LANDLORDS ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK

Annual safety checks must be carried out on all appliances every 12 months to comply with the current legislation. To ensure this, we work on a 10 month cycle for safety checks where the process to carry out the next safety check will be started 10 months after the date of the previous one 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, the gas supply will be capped to make it safe.

Once credit is obtained the tenant will be required to contact WGHC 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 tenants are identified as being vulnerable 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 services visits are due which 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.

The contractor will provide a Landlord Gas Safety Record for every property under the contract. The CP12 Certificate issued by Gas Sure or equivalent approved form will be deemed to satisfy this requirement. A copy of the certificate is to be issued to the tenant and a duplicate submitted to as soon as possible following the inspection and no later than seven days after the inspection.

Where action is required, the contractor should indicate if the work has been completed or follow-on repairs ordered.

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In accordance with The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 the safety check certificate, if the check was carried out up to 2 months before the expiry of the current one, will be dated as having been done on the anniversary date of the current certificate.

On receipt all Safety Check Certificates will be checked for accuracy and will be filed safely and will be retained on file for a minimum of 2 years from the date of the check.

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.

6.0 GAS REPAIRS 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 day time 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.
- ❖ Urgent: 3 Working Days
- ❖ Routine: 10 Working Days for Non-Urgent Repairs or situations where parts or materials cannot be obtained within Routine (1) timescales.

In accordance with our approach to continuous improvement the above response times will be reviewed on a regular basis. The category into 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 and 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. Effectuated tenants will be notified of any delays or extensions to target timescales as soon as possible.

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Flexibility may also be introduced in respect of the above categorisation of work or timescales, particularly in the case of vulnerable tenants with particular needs. In such cases repairs may be classified with a more urgent timescale or the target timescales for the particular repair may be reduced. The decision to apply this flexibility will be at the discretion of WGHC staff.

For routine repairs where the nature of the repair cannot be ascertained from the information available or where other factors require it 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 need to carry out the pre-inspection.

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

6.1 Change of Tenancy Gas Safety Checks

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 timescales set in the contract. The engineers will complete the appropriate certificate required by the regulations and contract and submit this to us. The timescale will only be deemed to have been met once the properly completed Safety Check Certificate is received by us along with the return of any keys issued.

The tenants' copy of the completed Safety Check Certificate will be passed to the Housing Department for issuing to the new tenant at allocation. Properties with gas installations will not be allocated without a current gas safety certificate.

6.2 Gas Appliance Register

WGHC 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 compliance & maintenance team.

Should any other section or department commission the replacement of appliances they must immediately notify the asset compliance & maintenance team of the changes to enable the register to be updated.

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7.0 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 of all their engineers 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 contractors in-house quality control, WGHC will also appoint an independent qualified gas quality control assessor to do an audit of 10% of all work carried out by the contractors on a random and ad-hoc basis.

These third party inspections will mainly cover landlords' annual safety checks but will also include an element of reactive repair work and 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 necessary to address any failings or shortcomings identified by the audit.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The asset compliance and maintenance team has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of gas safety. This includes the provision of adequate human and financial resources to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that gas systems are installed and maintained in compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

The asset compliance and maintenance team will ensure that the Gas Safety Policy and operational procedures for our properties and office are kept up to date with any legislative or good practice changes.

The Planned and Reactive Maintenance Officers 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 will be organised through the asset compliance and maintenance team, however, should any other section or department commission any gas related work the terms of this policy must be followed.

9.0 COMPLAINTS

If there are any complaints from tenants or any others affected by work covered by the Gas Safety Policy, a complaint can be made in accordance with our Complaints Policy in order to have any concerns investigated.

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10.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed 3 years from the date of implementation, latest review date, or any change in legislation, which will be the date the policy is approved by the Committee of Management, or earlier if deemed appropriate. In any event that the policy is not reviewed within the above timescale, the latest approved policy will continue to apply.

In reviewing the policy, feedback from tenants about their satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of the servicing and repairs service will be taken into account.

APPENDIX 1 - PROCEDURES

1.0 ACCESS FOR ANNUAL SERVICING

Under Regulation 39 (Exception as to Liability) of GSIUR, the co-op will be deemed not to be guilty of an offence under Regulation 36 should it be able to show that “all reasonable steps” were taken to prevent the offence from taking place, i.e. to have documented evidence of access attempts. Should a tenant refuse to provide access under the terms of the tenant’s Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement the co-op will arrange for forced access or for the gas supply to be capped off after giving notice to the tenant.

The process will include the following:

- ❖ Contractor will write to tenant advising date of service.
- ❖ Where the contractor fails to obtain access on the first visit, the tenant will be carded. The opportunity to reschedule the appointment to a more convenient date will be offered to the tenant.
- ❖ A second visit will be scheduled by the contractor and a letter from the co-op will be issued advising of this date. (Letter 1) All correspondence from will be hand delivered.
- ❖ If again the contractor fails to obtain access a further letter (Letter 2) will be issued to the tenant providing advance notice of possible forced access or capping of gas supply.
- ❖ If access is not provided on this occasion a final letter will be issued (Letter 3) which will give a date for the forced access or capping off supply.
- ❖ During every stage of the above process, staff will also attempt to contact the tenant by phone and agree an access arrangement.
- ❖ In all cases, forced entry will be scheduled for Monday to Thursday of the week prior to expiry of the current certificate. No forced entries will be scheduled to take place on a Friday, the day prior to a public holiday or when the office is closed unless all other options have been exhausted.
- ❖ On the day of the forced access a member of staff should call at the property to check if tenant is in. If forced entry is to go ahead staff should confirm with joiner that they are required and be in attendance when the door is forced, and locks changed. Staff should be in attendance when the gas engineer arrives to carry out the safety check. A notice should be fixed to the door to advise that the locks have been changed and to contact , also a letter should be left advising of this.

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APPENDIX 2

What to do if you smell gas

Do:

- ❖ Open doors and windows to allow fresh air in.
- ❖ Turn off the gas at the mains tap, which is usually near the meter. Move the handle a quarter turn until it's at 90 degrees from the pipe to shut off the gas supply.
- ❖ Leave the property.
- ❖ Phone the National Gas Emergencies number on **0800 111 999**. Only use a mobile phone from outside the property. The number is free and available 24 hours a day.

- ❖ Follow the advice given by the emergency adviser.
- ❖ Wait outside for a gas engineer to arrive.
- ❖ If you are feeling unwell, visit your GP or hospital immediately. Tell them you may have been exposed to a gas leak.

Don't:

- ❖ Smoke, light a match or use any other naked flame.
- ❖ Turn any electrical switches on or off.

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