



fairfield housing  
co-operative

## **Gas Safety Policy**

**Approval date: 26 June 2019**

**Approved by: Management Committee**

**Review date: 27 June 2022**

**Effective date: 27 June 2019**

**Policy Owner: Management Committee**

**Policy Author: G Swanson**

### This policy applies to

Employees and tenants of Fairfield Housing Co-operative

### Policy Summary

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear statement of the Fairfield Housing Co-operative's (FHC) policy on gas safety in domestic and commercial (residential and non-residential) buildings owned and managed by FHC.

This policy is of vital importance in ensuring the health and safety of tenants and residents of Co-operative properties and of those who live in the immediate area, work in, or visit their homes. As a landlord, FHC has a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of its tenants in properties where there are gas installations and appliances. This policy sets out how the FHC will fulfil these legal requirements.

### Equalities

Fairfield Housing Co-operative will ensure there is a consistent approach in promoting equality and diversity across all areas and this policy will be administered in accordance with the Fairfield Policy on Equality and Diversity (to be reviewed).

### Privacy

This policy has been developed and will be applied in compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

### Compliance

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998  
And other legislation as detailed at Section 2.3 in the policy

#### **SHR Regulatory Standards**

**Standard 1:** The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users

1.3 The governing body complies with its constitution and its legal obligations

### Related Policies

Reactive Maintenance Policy (to be reviewed)  
Right to Repair Policy (included above)

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As a landlord, Fairfield Housing Co-operative (FHC) has a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of its tenants in properties where there are gas installations and appliances. This policy sets out how FHC will fulfil these legal requirements.
- 1.2 FHC currently has 463 gas heated properties including 462 homes for rent and one office. As a landlord, FHC is responsible for ensuring that a Gas Safety Inspection is undertaken within 12 months of the previous inspection or installation of a new appliance in each of those properties under the terms of the tenancy or lease agreements. FHC has a related duty to report its performance on gas safety for rented and leased properties to the Regulator, and to notify the Regulator of any breaches in compliance that constitute a significant or material risk to the tenants or properties.
- 1.3 Implementation of this policy is vitally important in ensuring the health and safety of people who live in FHC's properties and to those who live in the immediate area, work in, or visit their homes.
- 1.3 The policy extends to boiler replacements, current and new gas central heating installations, gas pipework, servicing and maintenance and flues in all properties where FHC is the landlord. This includes properties added as a result of building new homes or individual properties purchased by FHC under the Mortgage to rent scheme.
- 1.4 The policy does not apply to any gas appliances, pipework or installations not wholly owned by FHC, e.g. gas cookers within the property owned by the tenant or leaseholder.
- 1.5 Compliance with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, wider legislation and current best practice means that our gas safety responsibilities extend beyond servicing, maintenance, installation and repairs into a much wider role. Fostering a positive attitude amongst tenants towards gas safety is important in preventing incidents, as is working effectively with partners and external organisations ensuring that residents have access to information and guidance about gas safety.

## 2.0 PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 The principles governing the operation of this policy are that the policy and associated procedures should:
  - be clear and understood by all employees
  - be fair, equitable and non-discriminatory
  - reflect statutory requirements and best practice
  - be flexible and adaptable to changing needs
- 2.2 FHC will comply with all relevant legislation, performance standards or any targets set down by the Scottish Housing Regulator in terms of gas servicing. In terms of gas

safety responsibilities, the following information is not an exhaustive list of legislation and guidance. Instead, it is a reference point, signposting to those pieces of legislation and guidance that are most relevant to this policy.

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- The Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998;
- The Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure;
- Right to Repair – Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
- Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996 (as amended);
- Gas Appliances (Safety) Regulations 1995;
- Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2014;
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013;
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015;
- Corporate Manslaughter Act 2007

### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

3.1 The objectives of the policy are to meet all legal and regulatory obligations and ensure best practice is followed in relation to gas safety. It therefore aims to:

- Keep the general public, tenants and employees safe from danger.
- Encourage tenants to participate in the continuous improvement of the gas servicing and repairs service, providing a variety of opportunities for involvement.
- Educate and inform tenants on the safe use of appliances within their homes.
- Raise resident and staff awareness of carbon monoxide and gas safety including recognising the symptoms of CO poisoning and the procedure to follow if it is suspected.
- Ensure that all procedures relating to the Gas Safety Policy support the fair treatment of all tenants with respect to their different needs, circumstances and lifestyle.

### **4.0 APPROACH AND METHOD**

#### **4.1 What we will do:**

FHC will ensure that it fulfils its legal and regulatory obligations relating to gas safety by:

1. Performing an annual gas safety inspection in every home where gas appliances are present within 12 months of the anniversary of the previous inspection or installation date.
2. Maintaining robust procedures and safe systems of work that aim to prevent the release of carbon monoxide from domestic appliances and flues and minimise

the risk of accidental damage to pipework and the subsequent release of natural gas.

3. Maintaining emergency procedures to effectively manage any situation if such a release occurs.
4. Acting on any issues raised from the annual gas safety inspection within appropriate timescales.
5. Monitoring installations and repairs to gas appliances carried out by FHC's contractors.
6. Maintaining gas safety records on all properties; ensuring that a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record is issued to the existing or new tenant within 28 days of the inspection and storing the Landlord's Gas Safety Record on file for a period of 2 years.
7. Operating and maintaining a robust reporting procedure within FHC.
8. Ensure that audit trails exist in the gas safety policy and procedures;
9. Making it as easy as possible for tenants to arrange an appointment for annual gas safety inspections, maintenance, repair, installation and upgrade works.
10. Ensuring that the risk of danger to residents, their neighbours and visitors and staff is minimised by use of robust procedures when:
  - Properties become void.
  - Properties are let.
  - Access to a property for the annual gas inspection cannot be gained.
  - Unsafe appliances and installations are identified.
  - Tenants are found sleeping in the same room as an open-flued gas appliance.
  - Annual testing of Carbon Monoxide, Smoke and Heat Alarms in conjunction with annual gas safety inspection in every FHC property with a gas appliance.
  - Ensuring the installation of a CO detector in every room containing a gas appliance or flue connected to a gas appliance.

## 4.2 Individual roles and responsibilities

**The Management Committee** in approving this policy acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy is delegated to the Chief Executive. The Maintenance Officer and Customer Service Advisor (Maintenance) have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed.

### **The Chief Executive must:**

- Monitor, through the Maintenance Officer, the implementation and effectiveness of the Gas Safety Policy through the Key Performance Indicators and procuring regular internal audit reports on behalf of the Management Committee.
- Ensure that an awareness of gas safety is promoted throughout the organisation.
- Ensure that FHC employees have the tools and resources necessary to encourage and develop safe working practices and attitudes towards gas safety and to deliver appropriate training when a need is identified.

- Ensure that all staff who have a role in ensuring the Gas Safety Policy is implemented are aware of their responsibilities and the requirements set out in the policy.

**The Maintenance Officer must:**

- Ensure the proper specification and procurement of competent gas servicing and component installation and repair contractors.
- Ensure all persons or contractors carrying out gas works are trained and competent to do so and are Gas Safe registered.
- Ensure that the requirements of the policy are communicated to all relevant staff and tenants and must reinforce such communication on a regular basis.
- Ensure that all appropriate staff receives adequate gas safety awareness training and are encouraged to develop and promote safe working practices and attitudes towards gas safety.
- Ensure that a monthly 10% audit is conducted on compliance across gas inspection records on the data management system.
- Keep up to date with current and proposed gas safety legislation, related regulatory and good practice requirements.

**The Head of Operations and Housing Manager must:**

- Ensure that the requirements of the policy are communicated to all housing and administrative support staff and reinforced on a regular basis.
- Ensure that all staff within their teams receive adequate gas safety awareness training and are encouraged to develop and promote safe working practices and attitudes towards gas safety.
- The Housing Officer must ensure housing management procedures are developed to follow up reports of repeated no access and capped at meter properties which be indicative of wider tenancy sustainment issues.

**The Customer Service Advisor (Maintenance) must:**

- Assist the Maintenance Officer to develop policies, procedures and safe working practices to enable FHC to meet its obligations under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.
- Monitor the Gas Safety Policy and implement related procedures to ensure compliance and report to the Maintenance Officer on a regular basis.
- Communicate with colleagues across FHC organisation as necessary to ensure continual communication with regards to gas central heating installations, gas servicing, repairs and appliance certification issues.
- Keep up to date with current and proposed gas safety legislation.
- Monitor reports to ensure that FHC audits a minimum of 10% of all gas work and documentation by post-inspection to ensure the competence of individual engineers and the quality of gas works and certification.
- Ensure weekly and monthly updates on the gas servicing programme are reported to the Maintenance Officer and Chief Executive.

- Ensure that each tenant receives a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record within 28 days of the inspection/Installation.
- Ensure that a copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record is provided to each new tenant within 28 days of the change of tenancy.
- Check for accurate completion, file and store all Landlord Gas Safety Records for a minimum period of 2 years.
- Update FHC's records to ensure a comprehensive database of gas heated properties, with anniversary dates.
- Ensure that the Gas Contractor conducts and provides evidence of a 10% audit check of all servicing work.
- Notify housing management staff of no access or capped at meter properties.

## **5.0 ENFORCEMENT**

5.1 The annual gas safety inspection is a responsibility that FHC must carry out to fulfil its legal duties as a landlord under Regulation 36 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

5.2 FHC must take all reasonable steps to carry out the annual gas safety inspection. In order to ensure that such steps are taken consistently with all tenants, FHC will follow robust procedures to encourage tenants to arrange an appointment for their annual gas safety inspection.

5.3 FHC will also ensure that tenants are provided with relevant information highlighting the risks of not having the annual gas safety inspection. This will include awareness campaigns, Tenant Newsletter, Tenant Welcome Pack, Gas Servicing Information Leaflets and personal education.

### **5.4 Access**

FHC will apply a four-stage process of communication to gain access to tenanted properties and carry out the Annual Gas Safety Inspection. Detailed procedures including template letters support these four stages. The fourth stage states that in accordance with the terms outlined in Paragraph 5.11 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, access to the property will be forced to carry out the gas service or cap the gas supply, unless access is provided before the anniversary date.

## **6.0 CONTRACTORS**

6.1 FHC will only engage Contractors which are Gas Safe Registered and able to demonstrate competence in gas safety, experience in this work and that no enforcement / legal action has been taken against them regarding non-compliance. This will be assessed as part of the procurement process for any Gas Servicing and Maintenance Contract.

## **7.0 MONITORING, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING**

7.1 The risks and implications of neglecting gas safety responsibilities are high: fire, explosion and carbon monoxide poisoning can all occur as a result of neglect and can all have fatal consequences. The following areas will therefore be subject to close monitoring:

- Risk management
- Compliance with policy requirements and procedures

These will be monitored by the Maintenance Officer reporting to the Chief Executive. If any significant issues of concern arise or any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls, the Chief Executive will report such matters to the Management Committee.

7.2 The operational performance on our compliance with our duties as a Landlord under The Gas Safety Installation and use Regulations 1998 with regards to Regulation 36 will be reported to the Chief Executive on a monthly basis and to the Management Committee on a quarterly basis. The report will include:

- Detail of the number of properties which require a Gas Safety Inspection
- The number of properties which have a current Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate in place
- Where applicable the detail of those properties which failed to have a Gas Safety Inspection carried out by the due anniversary date.
- Analysis of Stage 4 forced access visits including the number of properties there where the gas supply has been capped.

7.3 All Gas Safety Inspection Certificates will be checked for accuracy by the Customer Service Advisor (Maintenance) and any errors reported to the Maintenance Officer who will be responsible for raising any issues with the contractor. If the error is significant or serious this will then be reported to the Chief Executive.

7.4 The Customer Service Advisor (Maintenance) will also monitor, daily, the progress with access arrangements and issue the relevant access letters to ensure compliance with our Four Stage Access Procedure.

7.5 Weekly reports on current Gas Safety Inspection Certificates will be produced from *both* the Contractor's Portal and FHC's own data management system to ensure that all records are up to date. The Maintenance Officer will carry out a weekly 10% audit on the gas safety records to ensure our procedure is being applied and the necessary logging and documentation is valid.

7.6 Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the contractor's performance will be monitored monthly by the Maintenance Officer as part of the monthly review meetings. These meetings will also incorporate reconciliation of property data between the contractor's information systems and FHC's systems. If the contractor is not meeting the required KPIs then the Maintenance Officer will agree an action plan with contractor. If the action plan does not result in improved KPIs then, subject to contract provisions, the contract may be terminated.

- 7.7 In addition, FHC will require that the contractor carries out quality control checks on a minimum of 10% of gas safety inspections and provide evidence of this. FHC will also instruct an independent gas safety auditor to complete an audit on 10% of those serviced for the purpose of quality control.
- 7.8 For new installations, a further 10% independent audit will be carried out in addition to the internal audit carried out by the Maintenance Officer for new boiler installations.
- 7.9 The Gas Safety Policy and Procedures will be subject to review through our Internal Audit Process in which we aim to achieve Substantial Assurance.

## **8 COMPLAINTS**

- 8.1 Complaints and positive feedback are sources of information which help us to improve our services. We use a complaints handling procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 8.2 The CHP allows for most complaints to be resolved by front line staff within a five-day limit (first stage), or if the complaint is complex, a detailed investigation will be made by a manager within a 20-day limit (second stage). At the end of the second stage our response will be made by the Chief Executive. If the tenant remains dissatisfied, he/ she may then refer the matter to the SPSO.

## **9.0 POLICY AVAILABILITY**

- 9.1 This policy will be made available to all staff members within the “Policies” folder and to tenants by being published on the website and promoted on social media.

## **10.0 POLICY REVIEW**

- 10.1 FHC undertakes to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regard to:
- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
  - Changes in the organisation
  - Best practice development.