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## **Gas Safety Management Policy**

**SER-POL-09**

**Version 8.0**

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**Date approved: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**Approved by: Audit and Risk Committee**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Policy covers all Southway Housing Trust owned and leased properties.
- 1.2 Every year people die and many others suffer ill-health from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues which have not been properly installed or maintained. Although the numbers are not high, the potential impact of a single incident, on Southway Housing Trust and on its residents, would be profound.
- 1.3 Under the Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998, Southway Housing Trust has a statutory duty to take all reasonable steps to carry out annual gas safety checks, repairs and servicing on all gas installations/ fittings present in its housing stock. Failure to comply with this legislation is a criminal offence, which could result in prosecution of members of the board and senior managers of the Southway Housing Trust
- 1.4 Southway Housing Trust has a duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure appropriate management systems are in place to ensure customers are not put at risk from the effects of gas or carbon monoxide.
- 1.5 Southway Housing Trust is committed to complying with its legal obligations; in particular, those arising from the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (see section below).
- 1.6 Southway Housing Trust is committed to maintaining the safety of all the properties that we own or manage in order to secure the safety of our residents and other people.
- 1.7 The Gas Safety Management Plan (October 2019) will ensure that this Policy is put into effect. The aims of the policy therefore are to:
- a) Ensure the safety and welfare of all people in properties owned or managed by Southway Housing Trust. This includes residents, visitors, staff, contractors and the general public.
  - b) Ensure Southway Housing Trust complies with all relevant legislation and regulation.
  - c) Ensure all gas appliances and fittings are installed properly and safely.
  - d) Ensure all gas installations are inspected for gas safety and relevant appliances are serviced in accordance with manufacturer instructions

- e) To ensure a valid Landlords Gas Safety Record is produced annually and retained for two years.
  - f) To demonstrate and provide evidence that all reasonable measures are taken to ensure access to all properties and attain a gas safety certificate within a 12-month time frame.
  - g) To have a robust legal process to assist in gaining access to undertake the annual gas safety checks in difficult to access properties.
  - h) Provide an efficient service to customers, and minimise inconvenience and disruption whilst undertaking installations, servicing and repairs.
- 1.9 It is the responsibility of all staff named in the Gas Management Plan and anyone who carries out repair, maintenance and improvement works to be familiar with the procedures contained within the Gas Management Plan, to comply with these procedures, and also with current legislation, official guidance and good practice.
- 1.10 The supporting Gas Management Plan will form the basis of Southway Housing Trust's arrangements for satisfying the relevant legislation. It is in keeping with statements contained within Southway Housing Trust's Health and Safety Policy: "Arrangements for Gas and Gas Guidance Notes".

## **2. Background, Legislative and Regulatory Framework**

- 2.1 The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 specifically deals with the installation, maintenance and use of gas appliances, fittings and flues in domestic and commercial properties. They place a legal duty on Southway Housing Trust to ensure that:
- All relevant gas fittings, appliances and associated flues in our properties are installed and maintained in a safe condition;
  - All relevant gas fittings, appliances and associated flues in our properties are checked and serviced annually by a competent person;
  - Records of installations and the annual gas safety check are retained and are issued to customers.
- 2.2 These are in addition to more general duties under Health and Safety and Safety at Work legislation.

- 2.3 Southway Housing Trust will promote awareness Gas Safety, through information and training for employees, information to contractors working in our homes and common areas and information to residents.
- 2.4 The Policy, Plan and Procedures will apply to all premises under the control of Southway Housing Trust, including tenants' homes without exception.
- 2.5 Other relevant legislation:
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
  - Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996
  - Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996 (as amended)
  - Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (2006 Amendment & 1999)
  - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
  - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
  - Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000
  - Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
  - Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002
  - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
  - Gas Acts 1986 and 1995
  - Gas Appliance (Safety) Regulations 1995
  - Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005
  - Building Regulations and Building Standards Regulations

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Responsibility for gas safety lies ultimately with the Board, although delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive, acting as duty holder for the management and delivery of The Gas Safety Management Plan (October 2019).
- 3.2 The Strategic Director of Property and Development is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy and The Gas Safety Management Plan (October 2019).
- 3.3 The Head of Health and Safety & Compliance is responsible for the implementation of this Policy and The Gas Safety Management Plan (October 2019).
- 3.4 The Compliance Manager is responsible for the day to day management and compliance for Gas Safety across all Southway Housing Trust owned and managed premises.
- 3.5 The Compliance Manager will put suitable systems in place, for monitoring the effective implementation of this Policy. The key performance indicators for the effective management of Gas Safety will form part of the compliance report which will be updated monthly.
- 3.6 The Compliance Report will be reviewed monthly by the Head Health and Safety and Compliance and the Compliance Manager. The Compliance Team will be responsible for the scrutiny and audit of the relevant processes to assure compliance.
- 3.7 The Assistant Head of Operations is responsible for Operational day to day management for Gas Safety across all Southway Housing Trust owned and managed premises.
- 3.8 The Policy will be reviewed annually, if there is a change in legislation or following an incident.
- 3.9 The Management Plan and procedures will be reviewed annually, if there is a change in legislation or following an incident, to ensure that they remain fit for purpose on a day to day basis.

### **4. Staff and Contractors**

- 4.1 Southway Housing Trust will check registration details of all gas installation, servicing, repair contractors and their staff with the Gas Safe Register and

ensure the competency of all persons working with gas installations and associated equipment, prior to work commencing.

- 4.2 The credentials of all gas installation, servicing, repair contractors and their staff working on Southway Housing Trust will be recorded in a gas qualifications matrix.
- 4.3 The registration details for all gas installation, servicing, repair contractors and their staff, will be regularly checked, with the Gas Safe Register, with any changes recorded. within Southway Housing Trust's gas qualifications matrix.
- 4.4 Southway Housing Trust will review the training needs of new and existing staff to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities, as described in the gas safety procedures, and are appraised of changes in regulations and industry best practice.

### **Procedures**

- 4.5 We have robust procedures, detailed in The Southway Housing Trust Gas Safety Management Plan, to ensure the safe management of:
  - The annual gas servicing programme; domestic installations
  - The annual gas servicing programme; commercial installations
  - Renewal of gas installations and appliances via repairs and improvements;
  - Gas installations within void properties; and
  - Gas installations that are affected by works on or around them (e.g. flues during external cladding, gas fires during chimney rebuilds, kitchen refurbishments) using appropriate permit to work procedures.

### **Gas Servicing**

- 4.6 Southway Housing Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure that gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition.
- 4.7 Southway Housing Trust will ensure all 'Gas Systems' have an annual gas safety check. This check will include a visual inspection of tenants' own appliances in respect of gas safety, ventilation and flueing provisions, in accordance with the Gas Industry Unsafe Situation Procedure.

- 4.8 Where there is no appliance within a property a safety check will be conducted if the property has a gas meter, incoming gas pipe work, or a capped gas carcass.
- 4.9 All servicing and maintenance works will be carried out in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.
- 4.10 All installation, servicing and maintenance will be conducted only by competent staff or contractors, registered on the Gas Safe Register.
- 4.11 Southway will ensure that all empty properties or mutual exchange properties have a gas safety check prior to re-letting and irrespective of the date of the last inspection.
- 4.12 Southway Housing Trust owns and manages a number of assets served by communal gas boilers. The 'communal boiler' will be managed through a similar process to the general domestic gas safety inspection procedure; however difficult access is considered a low risk.
- 4.13 The contractor will inspect and record all gas appliances on LGSR, including any commercial gas equipment, and any associated ventilation systems pressure vessels that are a part of the gas installation(s).
- 4.14 The Southway Housing Trust Housing Trust Gas Safety Management Plan will detail the individual processes to ensure successful delivery of the Annual Gas Servicing Programme.

## **5. Access and Information to Residents**

- 5.1 Under the terms of Southway Housing Trust's Tenancy Agreements, tenants and occupiers must allow Southway Housing Trust staff and contractors or agents access to their property for the purpose of carrying out:
- Inspections of the condition of the property;
  - Repairs or other works to the property or an adjoining property; and
  - Gas appliance safety checks.
- 5.2 In the case of the annual gas safety checks, Southway Housing Trust will take all reasonable steps to ensure this work is carried out. This will involve writing to customers to give notice of an inspection, explain the reason for the inspection and request access. Records will be kept of the dates of all communications and visits. Where customer refuses access the Trust will take action for breach of tenancy.

- 5.3 Southway Housing Trust will ensure that the importance of gas safety is communicated to customers via information on the website and in the Tenant's Handbook and via regular features in Southway Housing Trust Stories.

### **Records and Certificates**

- 5.4 All Landlord's Gas Safety Records are checked by a competent manager for completeness and filed on the Housing Management System, where they are retained by Southway Housing Trust for two years.
- 5.5 A copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Records will be issued to the tenant of the property within seven days of the check being completed (note: the statutory requirement is within 28 days).
- 5.6 A copy of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record will be issued to any new tenant before they move into a property. Southway Housing Trust will check before a tenancy begins that all relevant checks have been conducted and produce a new Landlord's Gas Safety Record.
- 5.7 A copy of Landlord's Gas Safety Record will be provided on demand to the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authority Health and Safety Officers.

### **Monitoring**

- 5.8 All gas servicing and installation contractors will carry out independent external auditing of a sample of work that they undertake for Southway Housing Trust. In addition, Southway Housing Trust will employ independent external auditors to carry out audits on a minimum of 10% sample of servicing and installation works. Detailed reports on the outcome of these audits are received by Southway Housing Trust and appropriate action taken.
- 5.9 Gas Safety Inspection performance is included in the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) reported to the Executive Leadership Team and the Board.
- 5.10 Monthly performance reports are compiled by the Management Team, detailing the following performance measures:
- 5.11 Percentage of properties with a valid Landlord's Gas Safety Record
- 5.12 Number of tenanted properties without Landlord's Gas Safety Record, outstanding for more than three months
- 5.13 Weekly totals of issued Landlord's Gas Safety Record against programme targets.

- 5.14 Working practices, procedures and customer liaison in relation to all gas installation, servicing and repair are monitored and reviewed regularly, with a view to improving the efficiency and quality of operations.

## **6. Equality and Diversity**

- 6.1 Southway Housing Trust will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and with sensitivity to the diverse needs of individuals and communities.
- 6.2 This policy and other related Southway Housing Trust policies and publications can be provided on request in other formats (e.g. in an alternative language, in Braille, on tape, in large print).

## **7. Links to Other Policies**

- Asbestos Policy
- Fire Policy
- Gas Policy
- Electrical Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Single Equality Scheme
- Responsive Repairs Policy
- Voids Management Policy

<b>POLICY REVIEW HISTORY</b>	
<i>To be completed during each review</i>	
<b>Previous versions</b> (version number – approved by – approval date – title if different)	
V1 – Operations Committee – 06 May 2008 – Gas Servicing Policy V2 – Board – 19 May 2009 – Gas Servicing Policy V3 – Board – 22 March 2011 – Gas Safety Policy V4 – Audit & Risk committee - 01 April 2014 - Gas Safety Management V5.1 – Audit and Risk committee – 17th October 2017 V6 – Audit and Risk Committee – 15th October 2019 V7 – Audit and Risk Committee – 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2020 V8 - Audit and Risk Committee – 19th October 2021	
<b>Date of last EIA:</b>	
<b>Review lead by:</b>	Head of Health and safety and Compliance
<b>Main points or amendments made and reasons</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review date amended</li> <li>▪ Updated to reflect changes in structure Strengthened the Trust’s approach to monitoring compliance.</li> </ul>	
<b>Next review due:</b>	Q3 2022/23
<b>Approval level:</b>	Audit and Risk Committee