

GAS SAFETY & SOLID FUEL POLICY

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Executive Summary:
<p>This policy details how we maintain and service all RBH homes and assets in accordance with gas safety regulations. Our qualified professional gas engineers maintain and service gas boilers and fires to ensure all our tenants and residents live in a safe and warm home using appliances that are well maintained and efficient.</p>

Policy Grouping/Directorate(s)	Customer & Community	
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Notes:		

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housings (RBH) approach to Gas Safety across the Society. It sets out how we will comply with legislation in respect of the effective management of Gas systems, ensuring the health and safety of tenants, employees, contractors and the general public.
- 1.2 In addition to this, the Policy provides assurance that measures are in place to identify, manage and/or mitigate risks associated with Gas. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Gas Safety Procedures.
- 1.3 This policy also covers RBH's approach to solid fuel appliances installed in RBH homes which are directly or indirectly managed, leaseholder or shared ownership properties. It is the intention to phase out solid fuel appliances.

2 Context

- 2.1 This policy has been developed to ensure that RBH is compliant with all relevant Gas safety legislation.
- 2.2 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 tenants.
 - Decarbonisation – whilst gas is the main source of heating premises, we continue to explore ways to decarbonise our buildings whilst maintaining a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- 2.3 RBH has a legal obligation under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations (GSIUR) 2018 to maintain gas appliances owned by RBH. 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.
- 2.4 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that RBH fulfils all its legal obligations and adopts robust procedures to guarantee all work is compliant with the relevant legislation and meets the expectation of our tenants, the Regulator and the RBH Board.

3 Aims & Objectives

- 3.1 The promotion of Gas safety will be a mutual objective for employees, tenants, contractors and any other person or stakeholder who may work on, occupy, visit, or use its premises, or who may be affected by its activities or services. The policy is to be used to ensure everyone understands the obligations placed on RBH to maintain a safe environment for all.
- 3.2 RBH will follow a systematic approach to the management of Gas safety to ensure it meets the legal requirements, the society ensures all gas related activity is undertaken in the safest possible method that is in accordance with current regulations.
- 3.3 This policy covers all assets owned by the society (commercial and domestic), 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.

3.4 The policy fits with the mutual values of RBH:

Responsibility – We take responsibility 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 – This policy will help ensure a fair application to all those who may be affected.

Democracy – The approach has been developed in partnership with members through the consultation with Repairs, Asset Management and Health and Safety and has been approved by ELT.

Pioneering – The policy supports a forward-thinking approach to working with the relevant Enforcing Authorities and other partners to ensure we deliver the highest standard of Gas safety.

Collaboration – We are stronger together. We must be active listeners and partners, who respect diversity and tackle stigma. This empathy and deep collaborative ethos is the source of our strength and power.

4 Policy Statement

4.1 Duties as an employer and landlord in managing Gas safety

4.1.1 We will provide well maintained homes and premises improving Gas safety. A 'responsible person' leads the management of Gas safety and ensure compliance is achieved and maintained.

4.1.2 RBH will maintain accurate records to monitor compliance with procedures and legal requirements – A gas servicing database is maintained by RBH and this contains a register of all RBH homes. This database is reviewed and updated to ensure the property list remains accurate.

4.1.3 A record of completed and outstanding gas related repairs and maintenance is maintained within RBH's core housing management system.

4.1.4 RBH maintains an asset management register that records data associated to planned maintenance programmes both current and historical. We periodically undertake an asset data review to ensure that Gas safety data held against each property assets is accurate and up to date.

4.1.5 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.

4.2 Duties of employees in managing Gas safety

We will ensure that relevant colleagues fully understand the obligations placed on them to ensure their own and others safety is maintained. RBH ensures all employees have read the Gas Safety Policy and Associated Procedures.

4.3 Gas safety management procedures and resources

4.3.1 Effective communication is essential in delivering the Gas safety policy and we will therefore ensure that information relating to Gas safety will be made available to residents and building users via leaflets and information on our website.

4.3.2 RBH have a robust process in place to gain access should any tenant or leaseholder refuse access to carry out essential Gas Safety related inspection and remedial works or where tenant vulnerability issues are known or identified to ensure compliance with this policy. 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.

4.4 **Competent persons**

RBH will ensure that only suitably competent contractors and engineers that are Gas Safe registered, are procured and appointed to undertake works to Gas safety equipment, systems and installations.

All contractors will provide a copy of their current Gas Safe registration, copies of all of their gas engineers' registration and gas qualifications and also provide necessary insurances and indemnities.

4.5 **Management, production and recording of Landlords Gas Safety Checks**

4.5.1 RBH will operate a rolling programme of landlord's gas safety checks and service each gas appliance in line with manufacturer's instructions. This programme will be 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.

4.5.2 The gas safety records are processed electronically and stored within the gas servicing database for easy retrieval. A copy will be issued to our tenant within 28 days of the servicing taking place.

4.5.3 Robust processes are in place to address all significant findings identified by Gas Safety check.

4.6 **The management and provision of Gas safety equipment**

4.6.1 RBH directly employs its own Gas Safe engineers and in most cases an RBH engineer will undertake the repair, RBH employees and contractors should offer their ID to customers when visiting their homes.

4.6.2 There will be programmes in place for delivering, servicing and maintenance in accordance with all relevant British Standards and manufacturer's recommendations for all systems and equipment within buildings owned or managed.

4.7 **The promotion of Gas safety to tenants, employees and contractors**

4.7.1 Information about Gas safety, including prevention and protection measures is available to residents and building users. Up to date information on Gas safety will be available on our website.

4.7.2 We will ensure tenants are aware of the Gas safety management procedures for their home.

4.7.3 We will ensure employees, contractors and other relevant parties are aware of our management approach in respect of Gas safety.

4.7.4 Appropriate method statements will be agreed with contractors to ensure all relevant parties are fully aware of the extent to which works are being undertaken, access controlled and secured, so as not to endanger the safety of residents.

4.7.5 RBH will fully inspect any work associated with Gas safety to ensure works have not impacted or compromised the Gas safety measures in place for the premises.

4.8 **Training**

4.8.1 We will ensure that we identify and provide employees managing this area of compliance suitable training to enable them to carry out their duties concerning Gas safety. We will assess those in-house roles across the Society which require Gas safety training. The training will be provided by a suitably accredited training provider.

4.8.2 Training will include team briefings for those employees who need to have a basic understanding and awareness of Gas safety but who may not be actively involved in the delivery of the Gas safety policy. This will be basic Gas safety awareness training.

4.8.3 Toolbox presentations will be delivered to RBH operatives and contractor partners in the form of appropriate Gas safety training.

4.9 **Solid Fuel Appliances**

4.9.1 RBH intends to phase out the use of solid fuel appliances, there are 2 RBH homes that have solid fuel appliances. RBH has a responsibility to maintain the appliances in its homes until they are removed or replaced.

4.9.2 RBH has a responsibility as a landlord to ensure its homes and landlord appliances within the home are maintained and are operating in a safe condition and environment.

4.9.3 Whilst solid fuel appliances do not fall under any mandatory legislation to undertake regular safety checks RBH undertake cyclical safety checks to solid fuel appliances including the sweeping of the chimney by an RBH approved contractor up to the time when all solid fuel appliances have been removed from RBH homes.

4.9.4 RBH does not permit any installation of solid fuel appliances in their homes.

4.10 **How RBH manage non-compliance**

4.10.1 Any non-compliance issues identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Director of Property services in the first instance. The Director of Property Services will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the operational team in order to address the non-compliance issue and report details of the same to the Executive Leadership Team.

4.10.2 The Executive Leadership Team will ensure the relevant Committee and Board are made aware of any non-compliance issues, so they can consider the implications and take action as appropriate.

Non-compliance issues will be reported to the regulator as necessary.

4.11 **Accountability and responsibility**

4.11.1 The employer is represented by the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive of RBH is therefore the overall 'Responsible Person' for ensuring that all Gas safety matters are implemented.

4.11.2 The Executive Director of Customer & Communities is responsible for the implementation of this policy and associated procedure and is responsible for reporting performance to the Board.

5 Monitoring

5.1 All Gas safety work is monitored in the Gas Safety System. Key performance data is submitted monthly to ELT. Homes Safety Meetings are held every 6 weeks to discuss Gas Safety. In turn, reports are submitted to the H&S Committee, Risk and Compliance, Audit Committee and finally Board.

6 Review

6.1 All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.

6.2 This policy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

7 Links with Other RBH Documents

7.1 This policy links to the following policies and strategies:

- Sustainable Growth Delivery Plan
- Health & Safety Framework
- Responsive Repairs Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Gas Safety Procedures
- Access Policy