

GAS SAFETY AND SERVICING POLICY

Date Reviewed	November 2022	Next Review Date	November 2025
Consultation	Health & Safety Panel, RSVP	Reviewed By	Assets & Building Safety Manager
EIA	November 2022	Responsible Officer	Deputy CEO
DPIA	N/A	Approval By	BCHG Board

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Black Country Housing Group (the Group) is committed to the safety of its tenants, employees and the public.

The Group will carry out an annual safety check on each appliance and /or flue installed in the Group's properties within 12 months of being installed and afterwards at 12 monthly intervals in accordance with all Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and other relevant and health and safety legislation.

Failure to comply with the regulations is a criminal offence; but apart from this could result in:

- A health and safety risk which could lead to serious injury or death.
- Financial and legal penalties due to non-compliance with regulations to include downgrading by the regulator.
- Loss of reputation with tenants due to poor service delivery.

The Group will carry out a gas safety check on new lettings, meaning the gas supply will be capped when a property becomes void (refer to void and mutual exchange processes), a full turn on and test with service will be carried out as soon as practicably possible upon re-occupation. An annual gas service will be carried out to all Group properties with an incoming live gas main to include those where there are no gas appliances in use. Where properties are leaseholder or shared ownership responsibility for servicing falls entirely on the leaseholder.

All safety checks and servicing will be undertaken by contractors registered on the Gas Safe Register and whose employees are suitably qualified to undertake the work. A safety audit will be undertaken by an independent third party to ensure compliance with regulations and good practice on up to 5% of properties.

The Group's obligations to undertake the Gas Servicing programme is set out in the Tenancy agreement, the Groups website and the contracts to undertake this work. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner should the need arise.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

The Group in partnership with its external contractor(s) will operate this Policy through the Operations Team. The Assets and Building Safety Manager and Compliance Manager will have specific responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy and associated procedures (providing training as required) for Operations colleagues.

This Policy is to be implemented in accordance with all current Gas and operational regulations.

As a final resort the Group will take legal action against those tenants who fail to allow access for the service to be carried out after all reasonable measures have been taken and failed.

The Group will also carry out safety checks only on tenants' own appliances such as gas cookers and gas fires. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that their appliances are properly serviced and maintained by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

Where BCHG gas service contractor identifies problems identified with a tenant's own appliance, this will be recorded on the safety certificate and issued to the tenant. Where the problem is potentially dangerous, the appliance will be disconnected, and the supply capped off, however the heating system will remain connected, and in use.

In the case of a gas fire failing safety checks, this and its supply, will be disconnected and removed, with the gas fire opening sealed up. BCHG do not replace gas fires following their failure.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In relation to gas safety BCHG follows the appropriate statute and regulatory framework

- (a) The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) regulations 1998 (SI 1998 no 2451) (GSIUR)
- (b) Sections 2(1), 2(2), 3(1) and 3(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (The HSW Act) with regards to standards of training in gas safe installation
- (c) Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice L56

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Health and Safety Policy
- Gas Servicing Procedure
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy

5. SERVICE STANDARDS

- Landlord Gas Safety certificates (LGSR's) will be kept on file within Sharepoint and servicing dates recording on our PIMSS Compliance systems.
- Every property with a live gas supply and or gas appliances will be serviced within every 12 month period.
- We will commence the access procedure at month 10 in the 12 month cycle.
- We will make use of 2018 amendments to gas regulations to preserve the expiry date of the previous service, where the service was carried out between month 10 and the previous certificate's expiry date.
- We and our contractors will show proof of identity and introduce ourselves before we enter customer's homes.
- We will issue a gas safety certificate to the customer and make certificates available on the customer portal.
- We will give customers opportunities to allow access to carry out the servicing before using legal remedies to gain access.
- We will at all times act appropriately and in accordance with regulatory and legal requirements in gaining access to the premises to undertake necessary servicing and will take into account any specific special needs or vulnerability issues before initiating legal action against a tenant who fails to allow access for this purpose.
- We will offer support to tenants who have difficulties e.g.; with fuel poverty, and where tenants do not use gas, we will consider the installation of an alternate form of heating (i.e. Electric Boilers) to ensure homes have sufficient heating where practicable.
- We will give customers opportunities to comment on the quality of service delivery.
- BCHG may choose to cap off the gas supply to a property in exceptional circumstances. These cases will be approved by a member of the Executive Team and reported quarterly to Group Audit Committee as required.
- Capping will only occur following a resident risk assessment and Deputy CEO approval only if:
 - At least three attempts have been made to maintain the gas equipment
 - Legal Action has commenced against the resident for failure to give access to maintain the equipment or the tenant has consented to the action
 - There are no vulnerable residents within the property
 - That failure to do so puts other residents at risk
- For the avoidance of doubt, BCHG will not cap the supply of anyone who is self-isolating from Covid