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# Gas Safety Policy

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# Gas Safety Policy

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# Gas Safety Policy

## 1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1. Rykneld Homes Ltd (RHL) manages approximately 7,516 Council properties on behalf of North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) and owns and manages approximately 132 properties as a Registered Provider of Social Housing.
- 1.2. Rykneld Homes will implement efficient and effective gas safety checks, and maintenance programme, ensuring all gas related work is carried out in a safe manner in accordance with all current Regulations.
- 1.3. This Policy will ensure that all gas systems within our properties are properly managed and operate safely and that all new installation, maintenance and safety check work is carried out in accordance with our duties as landlords as required by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and in accordance with the regulator's Housing Standards.
- 1.4. This Policy covers all assets owned and managed by RHL, including housing stock. This Policy will cover the following works:
  - New or replacement gas installations and heating
  - Landlord annual gas safety inspection
  - Gas repairs and maintenance work
  - Change of tenancy gas safety checks.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1. New or Replacement Gas Installations and Heating

This includes the fitting of gas installations in new build properties as well as the replacement of installations in existing properties through planned or reactive maintenance work. Gas installations cover gas central heating and gas carcass to cookers and hobs.

### 2.2. Landlord Annual Gas Safety Inspection

This is the annual check required by the Gas Safety Regulations on all gas installations. In addition to the safety check, RHL will also carry out an annual service on all landlord gas appliances and visual inspections on customer's own appliances.

### 2.3. Gas Repairs and Maintenance Work

All essential day-to-day repairs which are categorised as responsive repair works which cannot be left to the next cycle of programmed maintenance without posing a threat to the safety or health of the customer, the property or the landlord's repair obligations. Day-to-day repairs are mostly reported by customers or from inspections carried out by RHL.

## 2.4. **Change of Tenancy Gas Safety Checks**

Checks are carried out at the start of a new tenancy, either at a change of tenancy or mutual exchange and for properties that have been acquired through the buyback scheme.

## 3. **General Principles**

- (a) To ensure all NEDDC/RHL gas installations and appliances are operated and maintained in a safe and useable condition.
- (b) To provide a prompt, efficient and effective service which is also sympathetic to the customer's needs.
- (c) 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 Agreement.
- (d) To clearly define the levels and standards of service for the installation and maintenance of gas installations and appliances.
- (e) To ensure that the works carried out through this Policy are undertaken safely, effectively and efficiently, in compliance with recognised good practice.
- (f) To have in place an effective monitoring system of both staff and contractors' performance taking into account customer and resident feedback.
- (g) To have appropriate procedures in place to ensure the aims of this Policy are implemented.
- (h) To report regularly to the Senior Management Team on performance, costs and other relevant issues.
- (i) Where RHL lease properties, the relevant works will be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the Lease, and this Policy may not necessarily apply.

## 4. **Legal Framework**

4.1. The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 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 and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

4.2. Under the terms of this legislation, the landlord's 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 keep all records for a minimum of two years

- To give a copy of the Landlord's Safety Certificate to the customers within 28 days of the safety check
- To ensure that all new customers are given a copy of the Safety Certificate at the point of occupancy
- To ensure that any work carried out on the behalf of RHL is carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

## **5. Selection and Appointment of Gas Engineers and Contractors**

- Only approved competent gas contractors and engineers work on or install any NEDDC/RHL gas systems and appliances. These companies and engineers must be registered on the Gas Safe Register.
- All Gas Engineers and contractors will be required to show evidence of their Gas Safe Registration and provide written confirmation of the Gas Safe Registration for individual engineers that will be working on any NEDDC/RHL properties. 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 and this will be checked annually.

## **6. New or Replacement Gas Installations and Heating Systems**

- 6.1. Only approved Gas Engineers or contractors will be allowed to carry out installation works.
- 6.2. Rykneld Homes will ensure that it receives a 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 and Use) Regulations 1998
  - Installed by a competent person
  - The system has been fully commissioned in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements
  - Rust inhibitor of suitable concentration has been added to the system
  - 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.

## 7. Landlords Annual Gas Safety Check

- 7.1. Rykneld Homes is responsible for ensuring the annual servicing of all the landlord's gas appliances located in domestic properties owned by NEDDC and itself as a Registered Provider. In addition, they are responsible for the safety of all gas installation pipe work and ensuring the safety of all flues located in those properties.
- 7.2. Instructions for the servicing, maintenance and repair of appliances/installations are as follows:
- All servicing/repairs shall be carried out in strict accordance with the manufacturers/appliance installation and servicing instructions. If the Gas Engineer encounters an appliance with which they are unfamiliar and there are no manufacturer's instructions readily available, they must contact a Gas Supervisor or the Gas Compliance Manager who will obtain the relevant handbook. The Senior Compliance Officer will re-arrange the gas service/repair for another time when the relevant instructions are obtained. If the appliance is unsafe this will be made safe or capped off until able to be made safe.
  - In the absence of manufacturer's instructions or guidance, the Gas Engineer must not attempt to commission, service or repair a gas appliance.
  - The Gas Engineer must always leave the installation in a safe condition.
  - All works and materials must comply with the requirements of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations and all other stated Byelaws, Regulations, British Standards and Codes of Practice.
- 7.3. Upon completion of a gas service and when all gas safety tests have been carried out, a Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate will be fully and accurately completed by the Gas Engineer; this will be an electronic version and once signed by both the customer and the Gas Engineer it is electronically uploaded to RHL's property file and a copy is given to the customer. Rykneld Homes will retain an electronic copy for its records. This is retained for two years.
- 7.4. If a Gas Engineer encounters an open-flued appliance and customers are sleeping in a room containing an open-flued appliance i.e. gas fire/back boiler unit, then the following actions must be taken to remove any risk from exposure to toxic fumes:
- Isolate and make safe the installation, provide temporary heating, where necessary, and arrange for the removal of the open-flued appliance. This is to be replaced with a room sealed appliance (e.g. combi boiler)
  - Inform the customer to refrain from using the room containing the appliance for sleeping and explain the risks
  - Arrange for Neighbourhood Services to contact the customer to consider more suitable accommodation, if applicable
  - The Gas Engineer must report any occurrence to the Gas Supervisor to ensure the appropriate actions are taken to remove any risk.

- 7.5. Where it is not possible for the Gas Engineer to carry out a tightness test and ensure gas safety, for any reason, i.e. no credit in gas meter etc, the Gas Engineer must cap the gas and complete the relevant warning notice.
- 7.6. The Gas Engineer must immediately inform the Senior Compliance Officer who will record that the gas has been isolated. The information will be collated weekly and passed to the Gas Supervisor who will inform the Housing Support team. The Housing Support team will contact the customer to offer support and advice to re-connect their supply.
- 7.7. The customer will be informed to contact RHL as soon as the supply has been re-established, and a Gas Engineer will be sent out to remove the blanking disc and carry out the necessary gas safety checks. A Landlord's Gas Safety Certificate will be issued by the Gas Engineer upon completion. We will regularly monitor and contact the properties and give the customers support to reconnect their supply. In adverse weather conditions we will contact the customers and give support where needed.

## **8. Gas No Access Policy**

- 8.1. Rykneld Homes have a legal obligation to carry out an annual gas safety check; we work with customers to gain access to complete this essential service by offering late appointments and Saturday appointments. Occasionally, we have difficult access properties and as a last resort we will apply for a Court-ordered Injunction to force entry to allow the essential check to go ahead.
- 8.2. By adhering to the Gas Service access procedure below, RHL will have demonstrated that all reasonable steps have been taken to gain access in order to carry out gas servicing.
- 8.3. Any disabilities, vulnerabilities or access restrictions are identified and input on the system for the Gas Engineer's information.
- 8.4. The whole process of no access will be recorded in full so as to ensure compliance with Regulation 39 of The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. This states that provided the landlord can show all reasonable steps have been taken to prevent the contravention of Regulation 36, no further liability exists.
- 8.5. Once the Court hearing grants an Injunction to enter the premises, forced access is gained to ensure the pipework and appliances are safe:
  - Rykneld Homes will send a letter with appointment date
  - 1<sup>st</sup> no access – RHL's Gas Engineer will attend and if no access will post another appointment date with seven days' notice. A copy is returned to file
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> no access – RHL's Gas Engineer will attend and if no access will post another appointment date with seven days' notice. A copy is returned to file and final letter before legal action is sent from RHL
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> no access – RHL's Gas Engineer will attend and if no access will post another appointment date with seven days' notice. A copy is returned to file and the

preparation for the legal paperwork for Injunction, Equality Impact Statement and Exhibits will be completed

- Rykneld Homes will continue to visit property until either gaining access to undertake safety checks or the Court hearing date and an Injunction to gain access is granted.

## **9. Gas Repairs and Maintenance**

- 9.1. This is to cover all day to day repairs required to gas installations or heating systems up to but not including complete replacement of systems or appliances.
- 9.2. Only approved contractors and engineers will be used.
- 9.3. Rykneld Homes' Contact Centre run a call handling service for reported repairs, out of hours call handling is handled by an external contractor.
- 9.4. The repairs will be appointed with the customer and prioritised in accordance with the Repairs Policy.
- 9.5. Delays and exemptions to timescales may occur in circumstances out of the control of RHL, 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.
- 9.6. Flexibility may also be introduced in respect of the above categorisation of work or the timescales, particularly to support vulnerable customers with needs relevant to the repair.

## **10. Change of Tenancy Gas Safety Checks**

- 10.1. A gas safety check will be carried out on the gas installation and any NEDDC/RHL owned appliances at the start of each new tenancy.
- 10.2. Only approved contractors and engineers will be used.
- 10.3. The boiler will be commissioned, and a full gas service will be completed.
- 10.4. The Gas Engineers will explain the operation of the heating system to the customer on completion of the gas service.
- 10.5. The customer's copy of the completed Gas Safety Certificate will be passed to the customer.
- 10.6. A copy of the completed Gas Safety Certificate will also be held by RHL for a minimum of two years.

## **11. Gas Appliance Register**

- 11.1. Rykneld Homes will hold centrally on the OpenHousing System a register of gas appliances. This register will detail:
  - A description of the appliance
  - The make, model and location
  - Date of installation.



- 11.2. When appliances are added or replaced, the register will be updated accordingly. Where any other section or department commissions the installation or replacement of appliances, they will notify the Property Services section of the changes to enable the register to be updated.

## **12. Quality Control**

- 12.1. The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, place responsibilities upon RHL to ensure that all appliances are left in a safe condition. The monitoring of gas work and the visual inspection of all completed work documentation (other than visual quality control of documentation) will be carried out in two ways: the physical monitoring of work and the competence of individuals.
- 12.2. Quality checks include:
- Documentation (Landlord Safety Records and Warning Notice)
  - Post inspection/physical work check
  - Tenant satisfaction.
- 12.3. All types of gas work conducted by Gas Engineers will be quality checked (monitored) by a Gas Supervisor on a regular and systematic basis. We aim to achieve a minimum 10% on all gas works. This will include all Gas Engineers, including agency staff, and any sub-contractors directly employed by RHL.
- 12.4. These quality inspections will mainly cover landlords' annual safety checks but will also include an element of reactive repair work and replacement installations.

## **13. Performance**

- 13.1. The Gas Compliance Manager monitors the performance daily and keeps abreast of difficult access properties.
- 13.2. Performance recorded is on the proportion of homes for which all the required gas safety checks have been carried out. The target for this is 100%.
- 13.3. Performance is reported to NEDDC and the Board on a quarterly basis.

## **14. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 14.1. In relation to Gas Safety Management, the principal responsibilities are:
- The Senior Operations Manager (Compliance) has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of gas safety within RHL. 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 Managing Director of RHL has overall responsibility for gas safety and will identify specific responsibilities within the Department. The Managing Director will also ensure that procedures are in place and that resources are made available to provide training to staff to enable them to fulfil their duties in relation to gas safety.

- 14.2. In relation to NEDDC/RHL existing stock, the Gas Compliance Manager will ensure that the Gas Safety Management Policy and Operational Procedures for NEDDC/RHL stock, offices and staff locations are kept up to date with any legislative, Regulation or good practice changes. The Gas Compliance Manager will ensure that these are communicated to all staff involved.
- 14.3. The Senior Operations Manager (Compliance) will ensure that contractual arrangements are made with approved contractors to carry out gas installations, servicing, safety inspections and reactive repairs that comply with all current legislation and good practice. The Gas Compliance Manager will be responsible for ensuring that each property is maintained, and a landlord safety check is carried out every 12 months, and that there is compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

## **15. Contact**

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