



GAS SERVICING POLICY

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1. Policy Objective and Aims

1.1 It is the aim of Lyng Community Association to provide a gas maintenance service to our tenants that is timely, routinely achieves high levels of satisfaction, delivers value for money and operates at an affordable cost and which complies in all respects to the law, current legislation and regulation.

1.2 The Association will meet its obligations as a landlord and have a robust process for ensuring that all gas appliances owned by the Association are maintained appropriately.

1.3 The Association's Gas Servicing will be provided in a consistent manner irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

2.0 Service Standards

2.1 The Association will:

- Use Gas Safe qualified and competent contractors and staff
- Ensure that contractors and staff respect tenants homes
- Ensure that tenants are offered an appointment for servicing and repairs
- Provide tenants with the appropriate contact numbers, including an out of hours emergency number for gas appliance breakdowns
- Provide emergency heating where the contractor is unable to provide a working heating system – minimum of 2 heaters per home (between 1st October and 1st May)
- Ensure all contractors abide by the Association's Codes of Conduct, Service Standards and Equality Policy
- Promote gas safety awareness through various means including the internet web page, new tenant sign ups and newsletters.

2.1 The Association has a legal responsibility to ensure that all gas appliances owned by the Association are maintained in a safe condition in compliance with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, This requires the Association to adequately and competently install, maintain and service all gas installations, appliances, flues and installation pipe-work.

2.3 The Association will do this by carrying out a gas safety check every year. The check includes a service to the gas appliance, not only to ensure it is operating safely but also to spot any potential problems, reducing the risk of a breakdown.

2.4 The Association will also install CO (Carbon Monoxide) detectors in all tenanted properties. CO detectors are not a legal requirement but will be installed as an additional safety measure. CO detectors detect carbon monoxide, a potentially fatal gas that can be produced by gas appliances that have been poorly installed or maintained or that are poorly ventilated.

The detectors will be installed during the annual service or during the void process and will be maintained by our gas contractor.

2.5 Paper/Hard copy Landlord Gas Safety Certificates are issued to tenants within 28 days of the gas safety check being undertaken both in the case of annual safety checks and those carried out during the mutual exchange process. All new tenants, with the exception of mutual exchanges, will be issued with a Gas Safety Certificate on the day of sign up.

TENANT

2.6 When a property becomes void, a safety check will be carried out to the gas heating system and it may be capped off (disconnected). This is to reduce risk to the property during the period the property is void. At sign up, the tenant will be issued with a letter requiring them to arrange an appointment for the Association's heating contractor to attend site, reconnect the system (remove the cap) and issue a **Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR)** or as it is commonly known "CP12" to the tenant. If there is no gas supply, the tenant will need to arrange this prior to the contractor reconnecting the system.

2.7 On-going maintenance will be carried out by the Association's gas contractor so that all breakdowns and remedial work are carried out quickly and efficiently ensuring that the loss of amenities (heating and hot water) is kept to a minimum. For family sized homes with vulnerable occupants, additional heating may be offered dependent on the household needs.

2.8 The response times for breakdowns and repairs will be:

• **WINTER - Between 1st October and 1st May (heating and hot water failures):**

Priority Breakdown (for tenants over the age of 65 or with young children up to the age of 5 years) – contractor to attend within 6 hours and completely resolve the issue within 24 hours (subject to parts availability).

Breakdown (for all other tenants) – same day attendance by the contractor and problem to be resolved completely within 24 hours (subject to parts availability).

• **SPRING/SUMMER Between 2nd May to 30th September Hot Water Failures**

Priority Breakdown (for tenants over the age of 65 or with infant children up to the age of 2 years) – contractor to attend within 6 hours and completely resolve the issue within 24 hours (subject to parts availability).

Breakdown (for all other tenants) – same day attendance by the contractor and problem to be resolved completely within 24 hours (subject to parts availability).

• **Between 2nd May to 30th September Heating Failures**

Breakdown – contractor to attend the next working day at the latest.

2.9 Where the contractor cannot fix the problem due to the need to order parts, tenants will be provided by the contractor with temporary heaters between 1st October and 1st May. Tenants will be kept informed of progress regarding parts on order.

3.0 Tenant Responsibilities

3.1 During the annual gas safety checks in tenant's homes, the Association will also carry out gas safety checks to their own gas appliances such as gas fires and cookers. The safety checks to tenants own gas fires includes a flue flow test, spillage test, ventilation check and a check to ensure any safety devices are working correctly.

If an appliance is found to be unsafe, it will be turned off and labelled "at risk". Tenants will be informed that they must replace the unsafe item and installation must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered engineer.

3.2 Where a tenant requests a repair to their central heating system and it transpires that the system was not defective and the fault was due to user error, the Association will consider whether it is appropriate to make a charge. Tenants will be expected to familiarise themselves with the operation of the system installed at their home. Advice will be made available by the Association.

4.0 Accessing Tenants Homes

4.1 To access a tenant's home to carry out a service, the Association will follow the following procedure:-

- First letter sent with an appointment (42 working days prior to due service date)
- If no access or contact to arrange an appointment, a second letter will be sent with an appointment (21 working days prior to due service date)
- If no access, third letter sent requesting urgent access (16 working days prior to due service date)
- If still no access provided by tenant, fourth letter sent recorded delivery by the Maintenance Officer (11 working days prior to service date)
- A solicitors letter will be sent is 7 working days prior to service date advising that legal action will be commenced and confirming the costs associated will be charged to the tenant

4.2 At this point, if there has still been no access, the Association will instigate legal action to obtain a court injunction at the earliest opportunity. Should the tenant fail to provide access following an injunction, the Association will seek possession of the property. For cases where tenancy enforcement action is required, the Maintenance Officer and Housing Officer will determine whether there are any other breaches of the tenancy which can be combined into one enforcement process.

4.3 The Tenant Profile data held by the Association will be checked to determine whether there are any vulnerability issues and where the Association has been unable to make contact with tenants directly; their Next Of Kin may be contacted in order to ensure that every effort is made to resolve the access issue before legal action is started.

4.4 The Association will consider the fitting of Service Interval Timers to be installed in properties where access has proved difficult. From a pre-determined date these will interrupt heating and hot water delivery and encourage residents to contact the contractor, who will be able to reset the timer and carry out a gas service and safety check. The initial trigger for deciding whether to install Service Interval Timers will be from the fourth access letter (or where there is a repeat at the third letter stage from previous 2 years).

4.5 Where tenants are genuinely unable to provide access in normal working hours, the gas contractor will offer appointments up to 7pm or on Saturdays between 8am to 12pm. Where access has not been provided, tenants will be reminded by text to make contact for an appointment.

4.6 The Maintenance Officer will maintain a detailed record of these access issues and report where necessary to the Housing Officer and General Manager. The list of properties that the contractor has been unable to gain access to will be made available to all staff, so that overdue services are identified when tenants contact staff on other matters.

5.0 Performance and Monitoring

5.1 The Association's target for ensuring gas safety certificate compliance will be 100% of properties having an up to date certificate. The cycle will be scheduled throughout the year and on a 10 month cycle so that no appliance will go over 12 months without the process for enforcement being commenced.

5.2 The Association will maintain a robust monitoring process to ensure that the gas servicing contractor is fulfilling their requirements under the terms of the contract and that residents receive an excellent service. A number of completed services (maximum 10%) will be physically checked by a Gas Safe registered third party. The Association will hold 3 monthly operational meetings with the gas contractor to review performance.

5.3 At the management meetings the contractor will be required to report and pass on:

- Any outstanding copies of the latest Landlord Gas Safety Records (LGSR's)
- Progress on the servicing/landlord's gas safety certificate programme
- Report on responsive maintenance in terms of the number of calls, categories and performance indicators
- Weekly reports upon the progress in achieving access to those properties where access has proved to be difficult

5.4 Performance on compliance for gas appliance safety is reported to our Board.

6.0 Record Keeping

6.1 All property records on the Omniledger database will be maintained and updated regularly to ensure that there is an accurate record of when appliances require safety checks. Copies of LGSR's will be stored electronically against each property to ensure compliance with regulations. Contractor records will be reconciled with the Association's own to identify any discrepancies and minimise the risk of properties not receiving a gas service check before the existing LGSR has expired.

7.0 Tenant Involvement and Feedback

7.1 Tenants will be involved in agreeing the service and standards associated with gas safety and servicing – mainly through a Value for Money scrutiny panel. Tenants will be invited to attend monthly contract meetings with the Association and the contractor to ensure continued involvement in the delivery of the service.

All correspondence to be sent to tenants will be reviewed and approved by tenants at the next review.

7.2 Tenants feedback will be sought through a variety of methods, including, independent telephone surveys, and in-house post inspections and via quality inspections. This information is used to review performance and identify improvements to the service.