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1. Introduction - Statement of intent

- 1.1 Gas installations and appliances pose a significant risk within domestic properties and the workplace. The key risks associated are gas leaks leading to explosions or fires, and poor combustion in faulty or inadequately maintained installations resulting in carbon monoxide release. As a landlord, Lewisham Homes is legally responsible for the safety of its tenants in relation to gas safety.
- 1.2 Lewisham Homes will comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, and any other obligations and statutory requirements regarding inspection and repairing of gas appliances, flues or oil based fuel systems. We will ensure that gas fittings, flues and appliances are maintained in good order and are checked for safety at least once in a 12 month period.

2. Purpose and scope

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that LH fulfils its legal obligations and duty of care to ensure that gas, and also where applicable oil, systems are safely installed, maintained and safe to use. This policy sets out Lewisham Homes' (LH) approach to ensuring the safety of all such installations and associated pipework where we are responsible for their management.

- 2.2 It confirms that we will adopt and implement robust procedures to guarantee all work in is compliant with the relevant legislation and meets the expectations of our residents and the Board. Our Building Safety and Compliance Service works with teams across LH to establish and implement robust procedures and risk assessments to deliver the policy requirements. The Strategic Health and Safety Team will support this.
- 2.3 The policy applies to works undertaken by LH staff or contractors working on our behalf.
- 2.4 This policy applies to properties LH manages on behalf of London Borough Lewisham (LBL), as well as those acquired or developed by LH. We have an annual gas safety program for tenanted and licenced¹ properties under our management.
- 2.5 Where we provide management of Private Sector Leased properties these are included within the annual gas safety check program.
- 2.6 LH is not responsible for gas installations and pipework in individual leasehold properties. However we will periodically remind leaseholders of the importance of carrying out a gas safety check.
- 2.7 This policy relates to and supports the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-23. This policy forms part of the occupational health and safety management system.

3. Legislation and regulation

- 3.1 The primary legislation is the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 which imposes on LH a general duty of care.
- 3.2 Under The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005 (HHSRS), we must inspect and where necessary act to reduce the risk for a range of listed hazards. For the purposes of this document these include Hazard 6: Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products, Hazard 9: Uncombusted fuel gas, Hazard 24: Fire, and Hazard 27: Explosions.
- 3.3 Specific regulations we must comply with are The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.
- 3.4 Other regulations which are applicable to this policy include but are not limited to:
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - The Gas Safety (Rights of Entry) Regulations 1996
 - The Gas Appliances (Safety) Regulations 1995
 - Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018.

¹ We will use the term tenant to refer to licences for the purpose of this policy, unless stated otherwise
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4. Responsibilities and Duty Holders

Responsible Person - The CEO is deemed to be the 'Responsible Person'. Whilst the CEO has overall accountability for the management of all aspects of health and safety including the management of gas safety, the day-to-day implementation of this policy is delegated to the Director of Property Services and Safety.

Duty Holders - The main duty holder will be the Director of Property Services and Safety, as delegated by the CEO and may nominate competent person(s) to deliver specific duties.

Gas Contractor duties - In relation to gas safety there are duties imposed upon gas contractors, suppliers, etc. to report cases where death or a major injury (as defined by regulations) occurs out of or in connection with the gas supplied. A contractor will have a duty to formally report under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) certain situations where it is deemed likely that the gas installation may cause death or major injury.

Resident responsibilities - The tenancy agreement places a responsibility on tenants to allow LH access to the property for the purposes of annual gas servicing and maintenance of gas, oil and solid fuel appliances. Leaseholders must use Gas-Safe registered contractors for gas work in their property, and must allow LH access where we require it to carry out repairing or maintenance duties, including inspection and investigation into an adjoining part of the building.

5. Gas, oil and solid fuel safety competence

- 5.1 The Director of Property Services and Safety will appoint suitably qualified persons to oversee the implementation of this policy.
- 5.2 Gas work will only be undertaken by gas engineers who are Gas Safe registered professionals.
- 5.3 All contractors appointed to work with gas or oil fueled appliances will be competent to do so and hold current registrations:
 - Gas Safe - gas
 - OFTEC-Oil
- 5.4 Where registration with the above is required, contractors will be asked for evidence of such registration prior to commencement of a term contract. Both the operative and the contractor must be registered with the relevant competency scheme(s). Evidence of registration must be updated to reflect any change in personnel assigned to a contract with LH.

6. Terms and definitions

Gas Safe Register

Gas Safe Register maintain the register of businesses and operatives who are competent and authorised to undertake both piped natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) work in Great Britain. Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 for a gas engineering business to legally undertake gas work that is within the scope of the Regulations they must be on the Gas Safe Register.

UKAS

Abbreviation for United Kingdom Accreditation Service who are the sole national accreditation body recognised by government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection and calibration services.

LGSR

The Landlord Gas Safety Record, a record of the inspection of a gas appliance carried out by a Gas Safe Registered engineer.

Gas Installation

A combination of all gas pipework and fittings from the landlords side to the gas meter.

Gas Appliance

An appliance designed for use by a consumer of gas for heating, cooking or other purposes for which gas can be used but it does not include a portable or mobile appliance supplied with gas from a cylinder.

Installation Pipework

Pipework for conveying gas for a particular consumer and any associated valve or other gas fitting including any pipework used to connect a gas appliance to other installation pipework and any shut off device at the inlet to the appliance.

7. Safety check program

- 7.1 Lewisham Homes shall arrange for a registered contractor to carry out an annual gas safety check on each gas installation that is provided for resident use.
- 7.2 Any gas appliance that fails the safety check will be disconnected from the gas supply and the tenant instructed not to use it until it can be removed, repaired or replaced.
- 7.3 The annual check will also include testing of all smoke and carbon monoxide alarms within a property. This includes replacement² of alarms which are defective or will become out of date prior to the next gas safety inspection. (See also section 12).
- 7.4 Lewisham Homes shall arrange for a registered contractor to carry out an annual gas safety check on each communal gas heating system. In addition, where the boiler has over 70 kW heat input, two inspections will be undertaken per year, comprising one major and one minor – one service and one visual inspection.

² Where a mains alarm is faulty a battery unit may be fitted as an interim measure
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- 7.5 When a self-contained property that does not share a gas meter becomes void, the gas supply will be capped as soon as reasonably practicable following the return of keys (target - the next working day). Any appliances installed and left by the previous tenant will be removed before re-letting.
- 7.6 A full service, safety check, and issue of a landlord gas safety record (LGSR) will be conducted prior to letting a property.
- 7.7 Gas Safety checks for mutual exchanges will be carried out in accordance with the Mutual Exchange policy. Before an exchange can be completed, it must be confirmed that there is a valid LGSR for the property. The outgoing tenant is responsible for allowing access, and is responsible for ensuring their own appliances are removed prior to the completion of the exchange.
- 7.8 Where there has been a safety check and issue of a new LGSR as part of a new letting, mutual exchange process, or because of major works, the date in the program for the next LGSR resets to a year from the new date. The date will be adjusted in the Heating Database.
- 7.9 On new build properties and those undergoing substantial refurbishment or major repairs, the main contractor will allow access to a third-party contractor, appointed by Lewisham Homes, to provide confirmation of the safety of the gas installation. The main contractor is required to remediate all gas-related non-compliance highlighted by Lewisham Homes' third-party contractor
- 7.10 In relation to agency managed properties and Private Sector Leasing (PSL), LBL work with third party landlords to ensure that annual gas checks are carried out. LBL may ask LH for their assistance to have the LGSR completed.

8. Certificates

- 8.1 On domestic gas installations, a new LGSR (or appropriate validation for oil) will be completed following works and passed on to LH.
- 8.2 All tenants will be issued with a copy of the safety certificate (LGSR). This may be issued electronically, or a physical copy mailed. New tenants will receive a copy of the LGSR as they move in.
- 8.3 For communal heating, a copy of the non-domestic GCSC (Gas and Combustion Safety Check) will be kept in the heating plant room. An electronic copy can be made available to a resident on request.
- 8.4 A record of all gas safety checks (the LGSR) will be retained for at least two years in an electronic format.

9. Appliances and pipework

- 9.1 Lewisham Homes are responsible for the pipework on the consumer side of the gas meter.
- 9.2 Where a gas cooker owned by LH/LBL requires replacement, we may replace it with an electric cooker. LH are responsible where we own such appliances (for example in some supported accommodation).
- 9.3 Where a tenant or leaseholder has their own appliance it is their responsibility to ensure it meets the required standard. Gas appliances must be installed, repaired or serviced by a Gas Safe registered engineer and the appliance itself must conform to regulations. Contractors will be instructed to note any non-complying cookers on the LGSR, and inform the resident of this. Where our contractor finds a faulty installation has taken place, we require them to leave the property safe and make recommendations for rectification. Work to rectify damage will be recharged to the resident.
- 9.4 Lewisham Homes do not permit gas fires in flatted buildings and will arrange for them to be removed upon identification.
- 9.5 Lewisham Homes will not give permission for residents to install any portable Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) appliances (including gas barbecues) in their homes, including balcony areas. Where they are identified LH will ensure that they are removed as a matter of priority.
- 9.6 Lewisham Homes will identify all pressure vessels associated with commercial boiler plant and ensure that these are inspected on a 14-month cycle as required by legislation. LBL instruct inspections as part of insurance arrangements. LH receive these reports and action them.
- 9.6 All shared flues will be inspected every 12 months by an independent inspector who will issue a report outlining their condition and recommending remedial actions such as decommissioning. LH will take action accordingly.

10. Gas repairs and maintenance

- 10.1 All repairs will be carried out in accordance with the timescales set out in the Repairs Policy.
- 10.2 Planned maintenance programmes will be determined annually and carried out on domestic and communal installations, including a rolling program of replacement and heating improvements. Such maintenance will be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for appliances. If these are not available, they will be serviced annually unless we are advised otherwise by a suitably qualified professional.
- 10.3 Where a repair visit, planned maintenance or issues identified at the safety check would result in no heating being available in the property, we will ensure that safe alternative temporary heating arrangements are made. Where a repair or replacement

installation cannot be carried out with a tenant in occupation, please see our temporary relocation (Decanting) policy.

11. Access to properties and capping supply

- 11.1 It is a condition of the tenancy agreement that tenants provide access to their property for a gas check. Lewisham Homes will make all efforts to gain access to carry out safety checks. Legislation permits LH to enter a tenant's property to view the condition and state of repair, provided that the occupier is given at least 24 hours' written notice.
- 11.2 In general LH will not cap the gas supply externally even where access is proving problematic, unless there is a smell of gas. However, where evidence strongly points to the property as being abandoned, or where a tenant has told us that they will be away from the property for a period and is unable to allow access in good time, it may be acceptable to cap the supply externally (in the latter case, with the agreement of the tenant). We will keep a record of how and why such a decision was made.
- 11.3 All properties with gas appliances will be inspected annually even if the preceding year they had been capped off. In addition, in occupied properties that have been capped off, we will continue to contact the tenant to offer advice and support.
- 11.4 The supply will always be capped-off at the emergency central valve and purged when the tenant vacates a property.
- 11.5 On new build properties and those undergoing substantial refurbishment or major repairs, (for example when a resident is accommodated elsewhere during a decant), the supply to the property will be capped-off upon completion of the work and/or until the new tenant/returning tenant moves in/back in.

12. Carbon monoxide alarms

- 12.1 In properties that have gas burning appliances LH will install at least one carbon monoxide detector/alarm. Where detector/alarms are installed, these will be tested and reported if defective.
- 12.2 A programme of carbon monoxide detector/alarm installation/replacement will be established.

13. Incidents

- 13.1 For suspected gas escapes, the smell of gas or activation of a carbon monoxide alarm, residents are directed to ventilate the property and follow the safety advice of their gas provider. The National Grid Gas plc Emergency Service telephone number is 0800 111 999.
- 13.2 In the event of gas being temporarily capped-off due to a response of a gas leak only a competent person (Gas Safe Register) will be allowed to reinstate the supply and re-commission the installation.

13.3 Where a competent person (Gas Safe Register) reports a gas defect in accordance with RIDDOR, their contract with LH will require them to provide details of the report to LH at the earliest opportunity. The Strategic Health and Safety Team will arrange for such investigation and analysis as maybe required in response to gas safety incidents.

13.4 Emergency response plans will be prepared, communicated and tested where there is a risk of significant risk from a gas or oil incident, and in line with the wider emergency response arrangements. This may include mitigating measures to reduce the risk to a building and making a decision to isolate or cap off the gas.

14. Monitoring and continual improvement

14.1 Lewisham Homes will undertake a percentage of third-party checks on its gas contractor(s).

14.2 The Health and Safety group will monitor the implementation of and compliance with this policy. The risk associated with gas will be recorded and assessed through the Health and Safety Board's risk register.

14.3 Gas safety performance indicators will be reported regularly to the Executive Leadership Team, together with any significant issues that arise.

14.4 Audits and reviews provide data reflecting the effectiveness of this policy and identify opportunities to achieve continual improvement in the management of gas safety at LH. A health and safety audit framework is in place which includes auditing arrangements for compliance with gas safety policy and procedures. Other checks and reviews may be undertaken periodically as required.

15. Equality, diversity and inclusion

15.1 The safety of our residents and workforce is of the utmost importance. This policy has been written to protect all concerned taking into account all protected characteristics. Specifically, we considered how we will continue to provide safe heating for vulnerable people in the event of maintenance issues.

15.2 We will ensure that relevant information is communicated in an accessible and understandable way with the aim of keeping people safe. This may include clear signage, instruction, and in some cases liaising with those giving support to a resident, (in accordance with data protection).

15.3 We will provide information to residents who may be undergoing hardship, and signpost them to support. We have processes for staff and contractors to raise a Safeguarding or vulnerability concern. For example where a resident may not be heating their home due to financial concerns.

16. Communication and consultation

- 17.1 The Building Safety and Compliance Service will liaise with other relevant teams and ensure this policy and the procedure which implements it is clearly communicated.
- 17.2 Relevant information, such as contact information, will be shared with contractors, to be sufficient for them to carry out their role, in line with this policy and in accordance with data protection requirements.
- 17.3 We will ensure that an approved version of this policy is published on the business' intranet, as well as on the LH website. Other gas safety information may periodically be made available on the LH website.
- 17.4 New tenants will be given advice at sign-up and provided with a Gas Safety leaflet that gives advice and basic precautions, along with a current gas safe certificate for their property.
- 17.5 In the initial development of this policy we consulted with staff, through our Health and Safety Group, and our Executive Team. In subsequent reviews we will check with the LH lead for gas safety for accuracy and any required changes to the policy prior to seeking reapproval.

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