



**Muirhouse
Housing
Association**



**Muirhouse
Homes Ltd**

Policy: Gas Safety Policy and Procedure

Title of Policy:	Gas Safety Policy and Procedure
Date of Adoption or Last Review:	9 November 2020
Lead Officer:	Paula Mcvay, Asset Management Officer
Date of Next Review:	November 2022
Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes & Standards:	<p>Standard 4: Quality of Housing</p> <p><i>“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants’ homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair”.</i></p> <p>Outcome 5: Repairs, maintenance, and Improvements</p> <p><i>“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants’ homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done”.</i></p>
Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management	<p>Standard 3:</p> <p><i>“The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being and economic effectiveness”</i></p>

Gas Policy and Procedure

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure that Muirhouse Housing Association complies with all legal obligations for gas safety as a landlord,

- Under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998.
- The Health and Safety Executives Publication, Landlords – A guide to landlord duties: Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006

2.0 Scope of Policy

This policy and procedure covers all tenanted properties managed by MHA which contain gas appliances and supplies. MHA is responsible for the installation, maintenance and use of gas appliances, fittings, and flues within its properties. It begins when an appliance or supply has been identified in the service sequence and concludes when a service record has been produced, logged, filed, and updated on the gas database. MHA must ensure that:

- All gas fittings and flues are maintained in a safe condition.
- An annual safety check is carried out on each gas appliance / flue.
- All maintenance and safety checks are carried out by a gas safe registered engineer.
- All new appliances installed are fitted by a registered engineer, and recorded within OMNI (computer management system) and HUB (Asset Management System)

3.0 Policy Objectives

To work with our tenants and third parties to complete annual gas inspections of all our relevant properties in accordance with legal requirements and in the interest of tenant safety.

4.0 Definitions

- Gas appliance refers to: Gas fires (with or without back boilers), wall mounted gas boilers, gas tumble dryers, gas cookers and hobs.
- Gas supply refers to: Gas supply pipework and/or gas meter (for which a soundness test will be carried out and certification produced).

5.0 Procedure

5.1 Register of Appliances

The Asset Management Officer will oversee that the association maintain a record of all gas appliances installed in MHA's managed properties, their previous service date, and copies of landlord's gas safety certificates, for the last two years. This information will form decisions from which budgets, and the annual planned servicing programme will be derived.

5.2 Obligation to Service Appliances

The Asset Management Officer will manage to ensure that an annual service & safety check is carried out on all gas appliances in the MHA's tenanted properties and in all properties managed by MHA. This obligation will be met through the implementation of a planned maintenance servicing programme. Void properties will have a gas safety check carried out and certificate issued prior to the commencement of any new tenancy agreement.

5.3 Programming and Preparing of Gas Appliance Service List

MHA's Gas Maintenance Contractor will run a services due report and programme to all required services. To ensure that all properties have a service carried out by their anniversary date all properties will be serviced on a 10-month cycle, this should allow for a no access or forced entry actions.

5.4 Implementation of Job Orders

MHA's Gas contractor will prepare job orders from their database to ensure all properties are serviced within contractual timescales.

5.5 The Asset team will create monthly reports of all properties due for the 10-month cycle (The report will be the service due date of 12 months). This will allow for in house monitoring which will create a safeguard of all properties, in case of any human or computer errors.

5.6 Execution of the Works

MHA's Gas Servicing Contractor will carry out the servicing in accordance with Gas Safe Register requirements and the Manufacturer's instructions for servicing the gas appliances.

5.7 During gas safety visit we will inspect all smoke/heat/carbon monoxide detectors in the property. If any are found to be faulty or missing the contractor will inform us straight away. We will then arrange for the detectors to be fixed or replaced.

5.8 Certification and Recording of Inspection

Following completion of the Appliance Servicing & Safety check, the Gas Engineer will:

- complete a Landlord's Inspection Service Record (CP12) or electronic equivalent.
- issue a copy record to the tenant.
- The Gas engineer will forward an electronic copy to MHA for recording and filing.
- A copy should also be provided for the inclusion in the void pack that is passed to the new tenant at sign up.
- A certificate will be issued to MHA to confirm the domestic service programme has been carried out on the smoke/heat/carbon monoxide detectors.

5.9 Notification and Rectification of Unsafe Appliances

During the gas service visit, the Gas Engineer will carry out a safety inspection of any and non-Association gas appliances in the property, and check that it is safe to use. If a non-Association appliance is found to be unsafe the Gas Engineer will address the issue all as per Gas Safe Register working practices. In addition, the Gas Engineer will inform the MHA straight away.

5.10 Logging of Completed Inspection/ Servicing

The Gas Contractor will ensure that gas service job orders are logged as complete and the gas safety certificate returned to MHA within 5 working days of the completed service.

5.11 Following the return of the Gas Appliance Service/Safety Record

- The Asset team will take the following action at least weekly:
- Log the Gas Appliance Inspection/Servicing date on to the gas safety OMNI database.
- File the Inspection Servicing Record in the relevant computer files.
- Update the gas servicing OMNI database to show new properties, change of ownership or appliances.
- The Asset Management Officer will produce weekly detailed reports which will highlight properties that will require intervention to get access This will also allow for monitoring to show date close to, at or over 365 days.

5.12 Notification to Customers

Action 1

The Gas Contractor will on the first occasion send a letter to the customer 2 weeks before the target date of the 10-monthly cycle. (Appendix 1A)

The first letter will give a date and time (AM or PM) when the service will be carried out. The customer will also be advised that they can change this date and time if does not suit.

5.13 In the event of a no access, the Gas Engineer will complete a No Access Post Card and deposit it at the premises.

5.14 Action 2

Where no response has been received from the tenant within 5 working days the Gas Contractor will send a Final Access letter advising the tenant to contact them to arrange a call within 5 working days. (Appendix 1B) Where a new service date has been arranged with the tenant and this date is passed the date a Final Access Letter would be sent, the Final Access Letter is still sent with the addition of the date the tenant has arranged the service for added to the Final Access Letter. This is carried out to act as a reminder to the tenant of the date they have planned the service for.

5.15 Action 3

Where no response is received from the tenant within 5 working days of the Final Access Letter being sent, the property address will be passed to Muirhouse Housing Association.

In accordance with the contract requirements the Gas Contractor will email MHA on daily basis to inform them on the status of access where the service has not been carried out.

Once a property has reached this stage staff will then follow the procedure below in section 5.16 to 5.25 as appropriate, if still no response.

5.16 No Access and Forced Entry

As a final mechanism to ensure compliance with our statutory obligations, we will consider forcing entry to carry out this work. Every effort will be made to avoid this, through repeated attempts to contact the tenant by letters, texts, emails, phone calls and home visits.

5.17 Action 4 – ‘No Access’ cards will again encourage tenants to call the Gas Contractor or MHA to arrange a suitable appointment. The Gas engineer will email MHA daily to update on all properties where there was no access. This will be monitored by the Asset Team for further action, every effort will be to contact the tenant, by visits, emails, calls, and texts. If there has still no access, or service carried out a new date will be agreed with the contractor and a letter sent by MHA. (Appendix 2).

5.18 Action 5 – 5 working days after the Action 4 has been followed and there is still no access or credit in the meter, a letter will be issued with a new date and time. This letter will also give notice of the intention to carry out a forced entry if no appointment is made. (Appendix 3). Every effort will be to contact the tenant, by visits, emails, calls, and texts at every stage.

5.19 Action 6 – Failure by the tenant to provide access, or contact the Gas Contractor or MHA within a further 5 days of the Action 5 then forced access arrangements will be made. A final letter will be hand delivered (Appendix 4) this letter will give a minimum of 14 days notice. The Asset Management Officer will continue to discuss with relevant team members such as the Housing team and Chief Executive, they will discuss if there are extenuating circumstances such as serious health issues which may impair the tenant’s ability to allow access. Staff will assess any risks which may be present during forced entry, to gain alternative contact numbers/email addresses or to ascertain any other circumstances why access has not been provided such as abandonment, custodial sentences or long term hospital stays. Again, attempts will continue to be made to contact the tenant by phone, text, email, and home visits. When calling by telephone, at least 3 attempts will be made (one a.m., on p.m. and one late call, and dates/times noted). This will be recorded in the property notes within OMNI of all times and dates of attempts made.

5.20 Action 6a For Mid – Market properties only, we will use this tenancy agreement signed at the start of the tenancy under Part 23 Access; which states; that the Tenant agrees to give the Landlord access to the accommodation for the purpose of carrying out maintenance, repair or inspection, providing that written notice has been given to the Tenant no later than 24 hours beforehand that such access is required.

- 5.21 Action 7 – Where the intended action is to be taken to force entry, the standard pro forma (Copy at Appendix 5) should be fully completed by the Asset Management Officer and countersigned by the Chief Executive prior to proceeding with arrangements to force entry.

In addition to this, clarification should be sought that a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) agreement has been signed by the current tenant and a copy is on file. Where no signed SST is present, the Asset Management Officer through MHA's solicitor will start the process to get a Sheriff's Warrant and no attempt to force entry will be made until this has been awarded.

- 5.22 Action 8 – Requirements to be followed on the day if forced access is required

- The lock changed (if tenant is not present and entry has been forced)
- Notification left pinned to the door (Copy at Appendix 6) stating that the locks have been changed (If required) and the service/safety check carried out, along with details of what the tenant must do next (contact the office to retrieve the new keys)
- Minimum 2 MHA staff members (exclusive of Gas Engineer) to remain in attendance whilst gas service is carried out, property vacated and secured. (Follow same procedure as Forced Access Entry Procedure)
- Where there is no gas supply (quantum meter) present at time of forced entry and service, the supply piping from the meter will be disconnected on MHA's side of the meter. The tenant will have to contact us direct to have this supply reinstated and the appliance serviced during the same visit.
- When contact with the tenant is made and there is still no gas on the meter, electric convector heaters will be offered as an alternative source until the meter is back in credit.

- 5.23 Action 9 – Staff present at the forced access visit will photograph any pre-existing damage as well as record work done in the house and the existing scene as well as any damage caused by the contractors as a result of the process of breaking in.

- 5.24 Action 10 – If a tenant makes, then breaks an arrangement for access we will move on to the next stage as if no arrangement had been made.

6.0 Quality Assurance

- All contractors instructed by MHA to work with gas appliances must demonstrate that they are on the Gas Safe Register of gas installers.
- Copies of Heating Engineer's Gas Safe registration cards will be provided to MHA annually.
- Only engineers who have submitted copies of their cards may work on MHA gas appliances.
- This information will be sent to the Asset team on an annual basis from all contractors who works on gas appliances for the Association, be it of a servicing or installation nature.

- At least 10% of Gas services/safety checks will receive a quality assurance inspection from an independent competent inspector.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 This policy and procedure will be reviewed again within one year, to allow for tenant consultation to take place. However regular reviews will be considered where for example, there is a need to respond to changes to new legislation/policy guidance.

[Type here]

Lothian Gas

tel 0131 440 4666
fax 0131 440 4667
enquiries@lothiangas.co.uk

Appendix 1. B

Tenants name and address

Wednesday, 07 Jun 2017

If this letter has crossed with any re arrangements you have made, please accept our apologies.

**FINAL ACCESS LETTER
ANNUAL APPLIANCE SERVICE
PLEASE CONTACT LOTHIAN GAS ON RECEIPT**

Dear Sir/Madam

We write to you on behalf of Muirhouse Housing Association as their nominated Gas Service contractor, to inform you that we have tried to gain access to your property on 02/06/2017 and were unsuccessful.

If you are now in a position to allow us access to your property, could you please contact us on 0131 440 4666 to make a mutually convenient appointment.

As it is a legal requirement under the Gas Safety Installation and Use Regulations 1998, to carry out an annual service and safety check on the appliances installed in your property, if we do not get a response to this letter WITHIN FIVE DAYS we have no other option than to pass your address back to Muirhouse Housing Association as your landlord in order that they may take the appropriate action to allow them to fulfill their duties under the Gas Safety Installation and Use Regulations 1998.

Failure to permit access may result in Muirhouse Housing Association taking legal action to obtain a warrant for entry, which will involve costly legal work which may be recharged to you.

Yours sincerely

M Britton|

On behalf of Lothian Gas

Lothian Gas Limited Registered in Scotland No. 176096
Registered Office Unit 5, Dryden Glen, Loanhead EH20 9NA
Director Steven Buckler



www.loth1an2as.co.uk

IMPORTANT GAS SAFETY INFORMATION ENCLOSED

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER.

Dear

I am writing to advise you that the Association requires access to fulfil its legal duty to carry out the annual maintenance to your gas appliance and/or gas supply pipework and/or gas meter. You were given notice to contact our contractors to make arrangements to for the service to be carried out. However, it has been noted that you have failed to contact them, to arrange for your gas and safety check to be carried out.

A new appointment is arranged for (Insert new appointment date and time). Please ensure you have credit on your gas and electricity meters at the time of the service.

If this time or date is not suitable you can contact the contractor Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666 or MHA on 0131 336 5282, you must make contact to change this date as soon as you get this letter.

As your landlord we have a legal obligation to service the gas appliances and gas supply in your property annually to ensure their efficiency and more importantly your safety and the safety of those around you. Unsafe gas appliances can also put neighbours at risk. Providing access for this work is a requirement of your tenancy agreement.

During this visit the engineer will also carry out a safety inspection of all the smoke/heat and carbon monoxide detectors.

Please make you have credit on your gas and electricity meters at the time of the service.

All engineers employed by Lothian Gas carry ID cards. Please ensure that you check the identity of anybody calling at your home before you let them in. If you are in any concerns call Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666 or the office on 0131 336 5282.

Yours sincerely

IMPORTANT GAS SAFETY INFORMATION ENCLOSED

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER

FINAL REMINDER: -

Dear

I am writing to remind you that you have a final rearranged appointment for your gas service to be carried out on (Insert new date and time) If this time or date is not suitable you can contact the contractor Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666 or MHA on 0131 336 5282, you must make contact to change this date as soon as you get this letter.

Our contractor has failed to get access on previous occasions, and it is now very important for your safety that you give access on the above date, and avoid further action, or any future costs that you may need to pay.

Failure to provide access will mean arrangements will be made for us to force entry so that our Gas Engineer can get access to the property to service the gas appliances/meter/gas supply pipework.

Please make you have credit on your gas and electricity meters at the time of the service.

During this visit the engineer will also carry out a safety inspection of all the smoke/heat and carbon monoxide detectors.

All engineers employed by Lothian Gas carry ID cards. Please check the identity of anybody calling at your home before you let them in. If you are in any concerns call Lothian Gas on 0131 440 4666 or the office on 0131 336 5282.

Yours sincerely

IMPORTANT GAS SAFETY INFORMATION ENCLOSED

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER.

Dear

We refer to previous correspondence regarding getting access to carry out the gas service, and we note that you have still not provided access for this work to be carried out. We will attempt to get access on

Minimum 7 days before planned forced entry

Failure to do so will mean arrangements will be made for our Gas Engineer to access the property to service the gas appliances/meter/gas supply pipework on:

Planned forced entry date

Staff will be in attendance. Should access not be made available to us, our tradesmen will be instructed to open the door, by forcing entry if necessary. If we must force entry, then the locks to the property will be changed. The keys for the new locks will be available at our office during normal working hours (9am to 5pm Mondays, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and 9am to 3:45pm Friday).

You will have to provide identification to be given your new keys.

You will be billed for all costs associated with this work, including the locksmith's time, even if you are in at the time of the forced entry or make access arrangement for that day. To avoid this please book your service in BEFORE the date given above

Yours sincerely

**Pro Forma for Authorisation to Force Entry
Authorisation for access by forced entry to carry out Gas Servicing**

To: (Chief Executive)

The following tenant has failed to provide access to their property to enable us to carry out a gas service/safety check. The information provided below details our attempts to inform the tenant of our requirements to access their home. Your authorisation is sought to force entry to the house on the date given below should the tenant not voluntarily give access that day.

Tenant Name:
Tenant Reference:
Tenant Address:
Date first contractors Access Letter Sent:
Date second contractors Access Letter Sent:
Confirmation MHA steps Action 4 and 5 followed
Final Warning Sent (7 day notice):
Final Warning Sent (14 day notice):
Date (s) tenant telephoned to attempt to arrange access:
Date (s) tenant was telephoned/Text to attempt to arrange access:
Confirmation that signed copy of SSTA is on file:
Staff Notes:
Date and time of proposed Forced Entry:
Signed and dated Asset Management Officer procedure followed on date of forced access:
Signed and dated by Chief Executive or stated authoritative person that they authorise the above action:

FORCE ENTRY

Appendix 6

The Association has forced entry to:

Address:

Date & Time:

**YOU WILL BE RECHARGED THE FULL COST OF THE
FORCED ENTRY**

Your new property keys can be collected from the **Associations Office** at **11 Muirhouse Medway EH4 4RW** during office hours.

- Opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 09:00 to 5:00pm and, Friday 09:00 to 15.45pm.
- Please ensure that you have 2 forms of ID with you as we will be unable to release the keys to you without this.
- A payment plan will also be put in place for you at this time to pay for the costs.

If you require any further information, please contact the Association on 0131 336 5282.

Yours Sincerely