



## **Gas Servicing and Maintenance Policy**

### **The Villages Housing Association Limited**

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Author:	Stephen Jackson
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## Safety Policy Document

**VHA**

Offices:-

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Reviewed September 2009

## Version Control

(Summarises revisions to the document)

<b>Version Number/ Date</b>	<b>Revision Details</b>	<b>By (person)</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Board Approval Date</b>
1	First Version	Andrew Flynn	Tony Dooley	
2	September 2009	Stephen Jackson and Ralph Thornhill	VHA Board	15/01/2010

## Distribution/ Alert

This document and subsequent changes to it will be distributed to/ alerted to the following staff member or groups:

<b>Team Managers</b>	All
<b>Team Members</b>	All
<b>Board Members</b>	All

## **Gas Servicing & Maintenance Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to identify the legal requirements placed on Villages Housing as a landlord to ensure that all installation pipe work, gas appliances and flue systems owned by the Association are serviced and maintained in accordance with current legislation.

### **2. Background**

Villages Housing owns and manages around 2751 properties on Merseyside and Oldham including multi-storey and low rise flats, general family housing and sheltered accommodation. We also manage a 15 unit local shopping centre in Stockbridge Village and a 5 unit shopping precinct in Fitton Hill offering essential services such as a pharmacy, bakery, post office and newsagents.

### **3. Responsibility of the Landlord**

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 places duties on landlords within the private and public sectors to ensure that all gas installation pipe work, gas appliance and flue systems owned by them are regularly maintained and are in a safe condition.

The duty is placed on landlords to protect their tenants from suffering due to faulty and un-serviced appliances.

The duty does not extend to appliances owned by the tenant, but does include a flue system servicing the appliance owned by the tenant.

In order to comply landlords must ensure that the installation pipe work, appliances and where applicable their flue system must be checked at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

In addition to keeping written records of inspection for 2 years, landlords are also required to ensure:-

- All inspections are carried out by Gas Safe registered engineers.
- All inspection reports are made available to tenants within 28 days.
- Appliances are safe for use prior to letting of properties.
- Close co-operation with tenants for the reporting of faults and gaining access for checks and maintenance.

- All relevant instruction booklets are available at the property for all gas appliances.

**3a.** VHA are proactive in managing contact with gas engineers. Gas engineers provide daily progress reports and information, in regards to no access and completed CP12 reports, to the gas administrator. VHA employ a specialist auditor (ICON) to undertake a variety of quality assurance checks which include:

- Engineering/ technical inspections (including boiler strip-downs)
- Flue & vent inspections
- Customer satisfaction
- CP12 being completed correctly.

**3b.**

- VHA governance structures are adequately informed of risk in relation to its policy on gas servicing, and assessments of progress and effectiveness of its practices. These are monitored on the Risk Register.
- VHA Board and Committee are provided with CP12 performance at every meeting to ensure that the progress and monitoring of the reports is done on a regular basis.
- VHA involves contractors, quality assurance agents and residents in reviewing the effectiveness of its arrangements for servicing and the legal remedies available to it. Tenants and Board members are involved significantly during final contractor selection processes. Monthly and quarterly review meetings are held with the contractor and safety auditor to evaluate effectiveness of service. Tenant representatives have not been involved with these reviews.
- Legal advice is always sought by VHA in specific cases where access to a property has not been provided.
- If we are aware of a tenant who speaks little or no English, we can make an appointment with Language Line (who provide a translator on the telephone) in anticipation of the agreed appointment that VHA have with the tenant.
- If VHA identify a vulnerable person or somebody with specific needs, we will endeavour to ensure that their needs are met and arrange for the contractor to be accompanied by a Villages Housing representative or relevant support worker.
- If for religious/cultural reasons, a female tenant requests a female operative this will be requested to the contractor. If in the event the contractor is unable to meet this request a female Housing Officer will accompany the contractor's operative to the appointment.

- The importance of gas safety is positively promoted to tenants through articles we publish in Villages newsletter - Our Times.
- CP12 (safety certificates) are provided to a tenant on completion of service and safety checks by the engineer. For voids, similarly provided to new tenants by engineer after completion of re-commission.
- VHA's tenancy agreement includes specific provision for access to the property to carry out gas servicing (section 3.2.2.1 of the tenancy agreement).
- VHA offer incentives to tenants to maximise opportunities for access to do gas servicing. An incentive scheme introduced in 2009 promotes more efficient access on 1<sup>st</sup> attempt by the contractor. A monthly draw of £50 will be done for those tenants who have provided access 1<sup>st</sup> time. This is administered by the Housing Management Team and not by the gas administration and surveying team.
- Gas fires are serviced and gas cookers recorded at the same time that the general gas service is carried out.

#### **4. Penalty and Enforcement**

The maximum penalty imposed in a magistrates court for non-compliance is £5,000. Should the case be referred to the Crown Court (e.g. contravention has led to serious injury or death) an unlimited fine or a custodial sentence may be imposed.