

GAS SAFETY POLICY

Background

This policy outlines the Housing Department's approach to Gas Safety Management. This policy is delivered under the Repairs Partnership Agreement in liaison with Dundee Contract Services.

Legislation

This policy supports the requirements of The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, statutory instrument 1998 No 2451. Any amendments, revisions and changes to this legislation will take precedence over this policy.

Gas Safety Checks and Servicing

The Housing Department will, on an annual basis, arrange for a gas safety check to be undertaken on all the gas boilers within the housing stock. The programming of this safety check will be undertaken at 9 months. This is to ensure that all properties are checked within the statutory 12 months.

For the convenience of the tenants, the Council will undertake a maintenance service at the same time as the gas safety check. Therefore the use of terms 'safety checks' and 'gas servicing' are deemed to mean the same thing.

The Housing Department will initially attempt to make contact with the tenant via phone (or any other media). If unsuccessful, a personal visit by a Gas Engineer will be undertaken (cold call). Thereafter, a series of letters will be sent to the tenant encouraging contact for an access arrangement. Ultimately, if no contact is made, the tenant will be scheduled for a forced entry.

Forced Entry

If a tenant has repeatedly ignored the Housing Department's efforts to arrange a gas safety check appointment, a forced entry will be arranged.

The tenant will receive a letter by post and by hand informing them of an appointment set by the Housing Department. The tenant will be encouraged to arrange access on this date. Should access not be provided, the Council will gain entry to the property in accordance with this procedure. The locks may also be changed.

This action is undertaken under clause 5.12 of the Tenancy Agreement which states:

"It is your responsibility to allow access for annual inspections of gas appliances that have been provided by us".

The tenant will be charged the cost of the forced entry at current Benchmark Job rates. A service timer unit will also be fitted.

Every effort will be made to make access arrangements with tenants. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Housing Department reserve the right to use forced entry to gain access after only one contact attempt.

Timer Units

The Council will install a service timer to properties under certain conditions:

- A forced entry.
- New boiler installation.
- At the discretion of a Housing Officer.

The timer is designed to disable the use of the boiler if a safety check has not been undertaken by the anniversary date of the previous check. The timer is set by the Gas Engineer at the time of the safety check.

Timers are set at 11 months from the date of the last check. This is to ensure activation of the disable function before the anniversary date.

Gas Safe

All DCS Gas Engineers will be Gas Safe registered and carry both their Gas Safe Registration and Council ID card.

Audit

The gas process will be audited on an annual basis by an external agent.

- 300 safety checks will be subject to a quality audit.
- The gas process will be audited by DCS internal audit arrangements for their quality assurance system.
- The DCS administration of the gas function will be audited as part of their Gas Safe Registration.

Performance Monitoring

The gas safety check process will be subject to regular performance monitoring by both the Housing and DCS Departments. Statistical information will be submitted to the Repairs Service Management Board on a monthly basis.

Attachments

Appendix 1	Gas Safety Check Process
Appendix 2	Gas Safety Check Flowcharts
Appendix 3	Gas Letters

GAS SERVICING PROCEDURES 2010

	Responsibility/ Action
1. System generates all properties due 3 months before their anniversary date with telephone numbers into the appointment queue. All properties are automatically sent a letter to inform them their service is due.	IT
2. If there is no telephone number available, then the property automatically goes into the cold call queue.	IT
3. The HRC try to contact tenants who have telephone numbers on the system.	HRC
4. If there is a telephone number on the system, but the HRC are unable to get in touch with the tenant 2 months before the anniversary date, the property moves into the cold call queue.	IT
5. If an appointment is made then one week before appointment a letter is sent to the tenant to remind them of appointment.	HRC
6. Two days before the appointment the HRC try to contact the tenant to remind them again of their appointment.	HRC
7. DCS allocate the job to a tradesman.	DCS
8. If access given, tradesman completes ticket and hands to the Gas Supervisor.	DCS
9. HRC staff complete the gas ticket inputting the gas safety certificate number.	HRC
10. System generates service again 3 months prior to the anniversary date.	IT
11. If no contact is made after one month from the property moving into the appointment queue by the HRC, it moves into the cold call queue.	HRC/IT
12. Properties in the cold call queue will be allocated to tradesman to call on within 14 days of appearing on queue.	HRC/DCS
13. The tradesman will visit the property to try to gain access to service the appliances.	DCS
14. If abortive call from tradesman visits, the tradesman completes the ticket and hands to HRC.	DCS

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

	Responsibility/ Action
15. HRC process abortive call on system.	HRC
16. Property moves to abortive call queue.	IT
17. When in abortive call queue, if telephone number available for tenant HRC attempt to call tenant again to try and make appointment.	HRC
18. If no telephone number available or no contact is made with the tenant within 7 days of the abortive call then Letter 2 (Recorded Delivery) is sent out.	IT/HRC
19. If after 7 days from Letter 2 (Recorded Delivery) there is no contact from the tenant, this is passed to the Legal queue.	IT
20. When property moves into Legal queue this generates a Legal Letter informing the tenant that we will force entry if they do not allow access.	HRC
Forced Entry	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is still no contact by the tenant then it is passed over to the Forced Entry queue. The tenant still has opportunity to arrange an appointment until the forced entry date is set. 	IT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each week the Housing Repairs Supervisor will check the forced entry queue and will arrange forced entries that are within 14 days of their anniversary date, also ensuring they have received all letters required through the gas process. 	HRCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The forced entry appointment will be arranged for no later than the anniversary date. 	HRCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Housing Repairs Supervisor will also check the tenant has not had a recent service or have a current appointment arranged within the next few days. 	HRCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an appointment is arranged the Housing Repairs Supervisor will monitor this appointment and if the appointment is an abortive call will arrange the forced entry as soon as possible thereafter. 	HRCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the tenant has not arranged an appointment within 14 days of their anniversary date, the Housing Repairs Supervisor allocates the property for a Forced Entry appointment. 	HRCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is arranged on estate basis by the oldest service date. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The same day the appointment is made a letter is generated on the system to inform the tenant of the appointment arranged. 	IT

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

	Responsibility/ Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One copy of the letters are printed at Keyboard Services who will send out the letters first class. 	Keyboard Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another copy of the letters is sent out to the District Office who will arrange for these to be hand-delivered. 	DO/HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the forced entry a list is e-mailed to the District Housing Managers, District Team Leaders, Housing Repairs Supervisor, HRC Advisors, Maintenance Manager and Assistant Maintenance Manager, Lily Walker Centre and Emergency Contact Officer. 	HRS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District Housing Managers will then identify a Housing Officer to attend with the tradesman. 	DHM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Officer will ensure that they have any keys or fobs required to gain entry into the blocks. 	HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tenant will have the opportunity to contact the HRC if they wish to leave keys at either the HRC, a District Office or with a neighbour instead of the Joiner gaining entry. 	HRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HRC will log the access arrangements on the line if not allocated to the tradesman. 	HRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it has already been allocated then they must inform the Assistant Maintenance Manager or Maintenance Manager so the job line can be manually amended. 	HRC/DCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the appointment has been logged it will move into the Print Legal Letters Queue to generate the letters, as well as the job allocation screen for forced entry to be allocated. 	HRS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Housing Repairs Supervisor will allocate tradesmen to undertake the scheduled forced entries. 	HRS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The job tickets are given to the Trade Supervisor. 	HRS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names of the tradesmen who will be undertaking this work will be provided by the Maintenance Manager or Assistant Maintenance Manager. 	DCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lines are issued to the tradesmen who are required to undertake this work. 	DCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of forced entries undertaken will vary according to the number of properties requiring a forced entry. 	DCS/HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once the service is complete an Electrician will fit a service interval timer. 	DCS

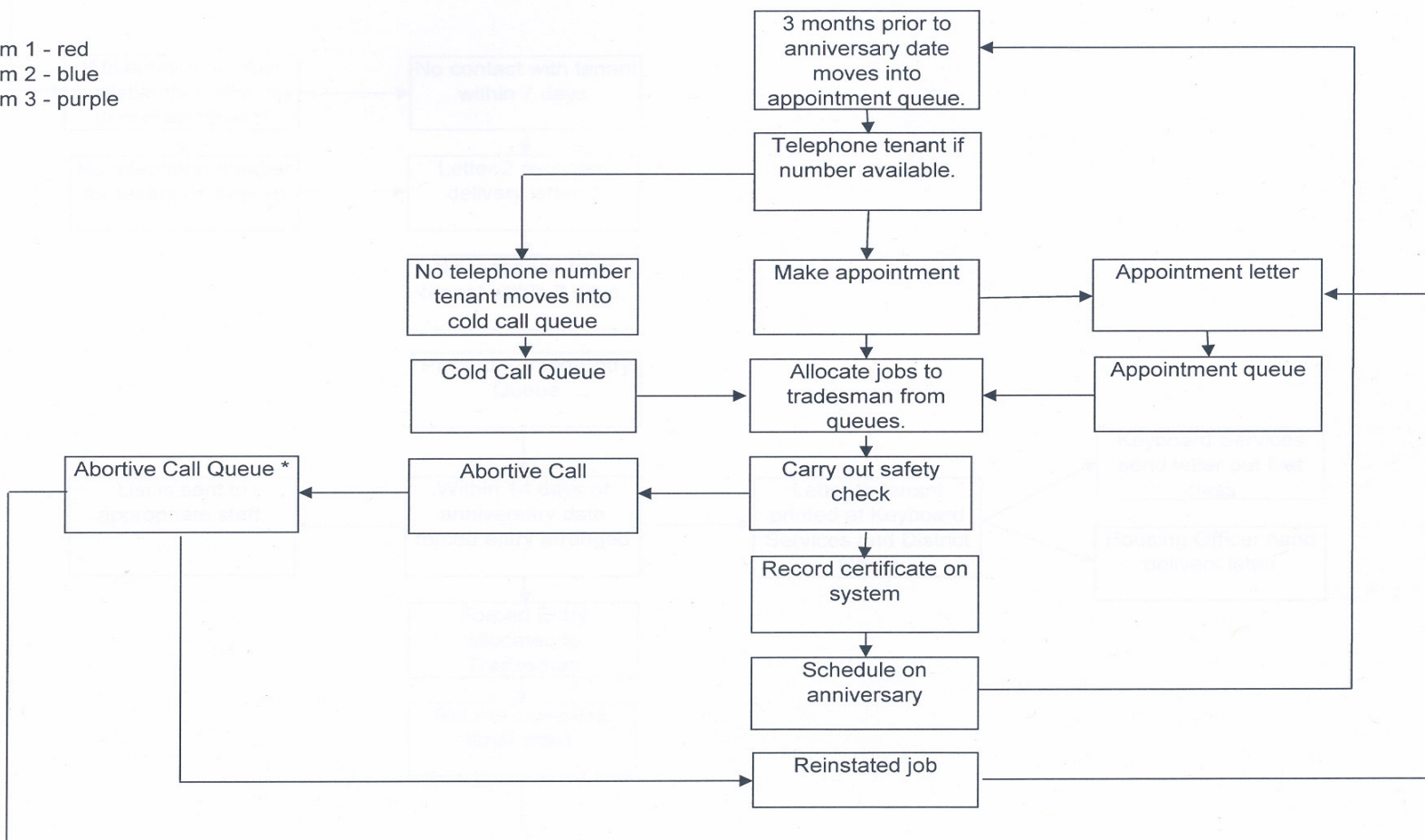
	Responsibility/ Action
<p>Keys</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Housing Officer will attend forced entries along with the tradesmen. 	HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a lock change is required the keys will be given to the Housing Officer to retain. 	DO/HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of each day the District Office/Housing Officer will pass one set of the new keys to the Lily Walker Centre for the tenant to collect out of office hours. One set will be retained by the District Office. 	HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the tenant contacts the HRC or Out of Hours Service they will advise the tenant to contact the Out of Hours number for the Lily Walker Centre to arrange to pick up the keys. 	HRC/DCS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The District Office and the Lily Walker Centre are to liaise regarding the keys to ensure that the tenant receives both sets. 	LWC/DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is no response from the tenant within 48 hours of the lock change being completed the keys will be returned to the District Office who will store the keys and decide on further action. 	DO
<p>Notes</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the HRC try to contact the tenant on the number provided on the system and this number is no longer available then HRC staff will remove the number of the system and move the tenant into the cold call queue. 	HRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The HRC Supervisor will liaise on a daily basis with the Gas Supervisor and Maintenance Manager to ensure any problems are resolved. 	HRS/GS/MM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Gas Group will meet on a quarterly basis to review progress with the annual gas servicing programme and anticipate future problems. In particular, the group will focus on no access issues, forced entries and resourcing to the servicing programme. Attendees to be confirmed. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 25 appointments available on the system for both morning and afternoon (20 on a Friday); there is scope to accommodate more if required. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the tenant calls to report a repair and they require a gas service, the HRC staff will attempt to book an appointment at this time with the tenant. 	HRC

Appendix 1 (cont'd)

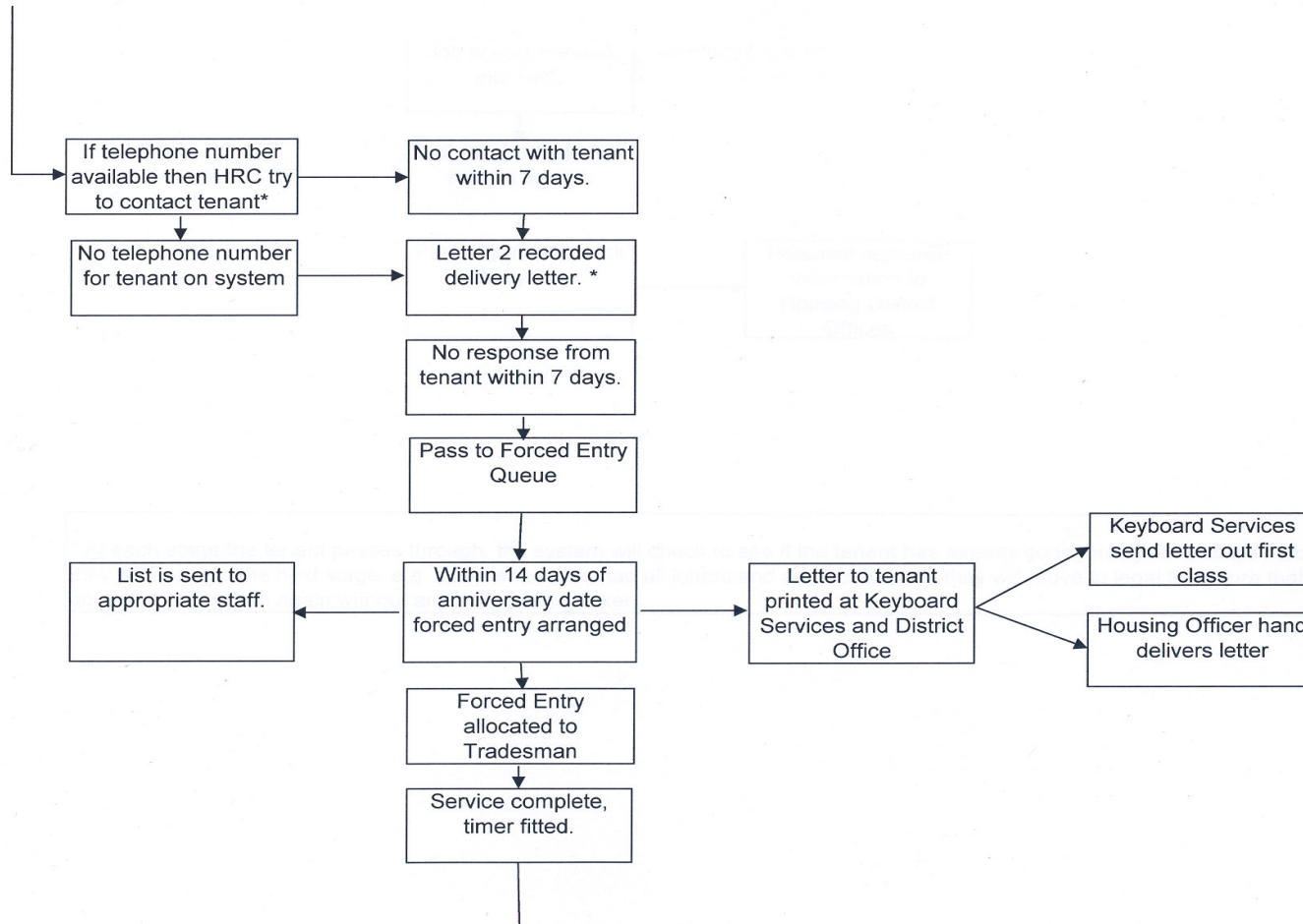
	Responsibility/ Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Initially for the first month of forced entries the Police will also be in attendance. After this period the Police will be contacted to attend should the Housing Officer feel this is required.	HO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Attempts to get in touch with tenants during the weekend and in the evening to make appointments will be undertaken if necessary to ensure that appointments for the following week are maximised.	HRC
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For properties which are void or are with the Housing Investment Unit, the Housing Repairs Supervisor will request to the appropriate office that the keys for the property are sent to the HRC for access for the gas service. All keys must be sent to the HRC and access will only be through this route.	HRS/HIU
<ul style="list-style-type: none">HIU will update the repairs system when properties are in defects.	HIU

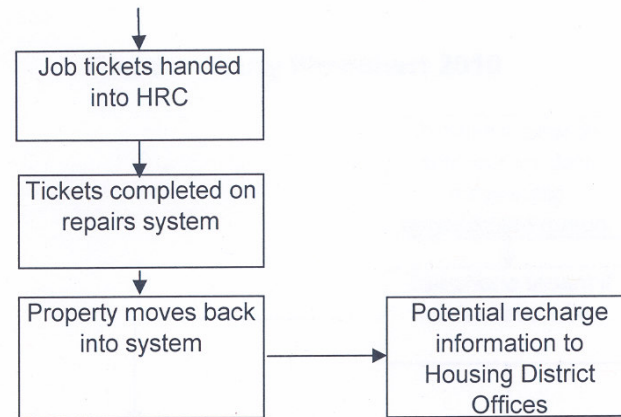
Gas Servicing Flowchart 2010

Team 1 - red
 Team 2 - blue
 Team 3 - purple



Appendix 2 (cont'd)





* At each stage the tenant passes through, the system will check to see if the tenant has already gone through this stage before, if yes, they will move to the next stage, e.g. if the tenant has had all letters and an abortive call, they will move to legal to ensure that they do not go round the system again without any action being taken.

If calling please ask for
Housing Repairs Centre
Tel: 434343

Our Ref. **HRC/Letter 1**
Your Ref.
Date

Dear Tenant

ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK AND SERVICE

We are required by law to check your gas boiler every year. This check is necessary to make sure your boiler is safe to use and is working properly.

Please contact the Housing Repairs Centre on telephone 434343 within the next 7 days to make an appointment to have the safety check carried out by one of our gas engineers. We will arrange this at your convenience. If you have a credit meter, please make sure you have gas and electricity.

We would also like to update your contact details so that we can keep you informed of progress with repairs in the future.

Yours sincerely

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

If calling please ask for
Housing Repairs Centre
Tel: 434343

Our Ref. **HRC/Letter 2**
Your Ref.
Date

Dear Tenant

ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK AND SERVICE - REMINDER

You have not yet contacted us to arrange your gas safety check.

Our gas engineer called on you to undertake this work and was not able to gain access. Please contact the Housing Repairs Centre on Tel. 434343 to make an appointment for this as a matter of urgency.

Remember that we must get access to carry out this safety check, which is required by law.

Please do not ignore this letter.

Yours sincerely

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

If calling please ask for
Housing Repairs Centre
Tel: 434343

Our Ref. **HRC/Letter 3**
Your Ref.
Date

Dear Tenant

BREACH OF TENANCY - ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK AND SERVICE

We have not yet been able to carry out the annual gas safety check on your gas boiler. We have made attempts to arrange this with you.

You are in breach of your Tenancy Agreement (clause 5.12).

This check is essential for the safety of you and your family. **Please contact the Housing Repairs Centre immediately on telephone 434343** to make arrangements for this safety check to be carried out.

If you do not arrange access, we may force entry into your home to undertake this work. You will be liable for the expense of this action. If your boiler breaks down, this check will need to be done before a repair is carried out.

ACT NOW!

Yours sincerely

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

If calling please ask for
Housing Repairs Centre
Tel: 434343

Our Ref. **HRC/Letter 4**
Your Ref.
Date

Dear Tenant

GAS CENTRAL HEATING MAINTENANCE - ANNUAL SERVICE

Your gas boiler safety check appointment is:

(Day) (Date) (Period am/pm)

Your co-operation in providing access is greatly appreciated.

It is important that you keep this appointment. However, if you need to change it please contact the Housing Repairs Centre on telephone 434343 to arrange a new appointment.

Yours sincerely

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

If calling please ask for
Housing Repairs Centre, Tel: 434343

e-mail address:
www.dundee.gov.uk/housing

Our Ref. **HRC/FE**
Your Ref.
Date

URGENT NOTICE - DO NOT IGNORE

Dear

GAS SAFETY CHECK – FORCED ENTRY

Your gas boiler safety check is now overdue.

Council Officers will force entry into your home to carry out the gas safety check on:

(Day) (Date) (Period am/pm)

We will recover from you all costs associated with forcing entry into your home and any subsequent repairs required as a result of this action.

We may also change the locks on your door. In this case you will need to contact 434343 who will advise you further. You will require proof of identification to collect your keys.

We will install a timer to your boiler which will alert you to the next scheduled gas safety check deadline. If it switches your boiler off, you should phone the Housing Repairs Centre on 434343.

Yours sincerely

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING