Gas Safety Policy

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Responsible Officer		Natalie Newman – Head of Asset Management	
Approved by		Board of Management- PENDING	
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1 Purpose

1.1 This policy applies to all properties where Arches has a responsibility for gas safety. This includes individual homes/properties where domestic and communal gas installations are present. This policy extends to items such as boilers, fires, flues and associated pipework.

1.2 The majority of our properties are heated by gas or have a gas installation. Properties not supplied with a gas installation/supply will have their own specific testing and maintenance provision, which are not covered by this policy.

2 Regulation, Legislation and Approved Codes of Practice

2.1 The principal legislation for requirements for undertaking landlord gas safety checks are set out by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998.

2.2 These regulations are for anyone who may have a duty under the regulations, including those who install, service, maintain or repair gas appliances and other gas fittings.

2.3 They place a statutory requirement on landlords to make sure that gas appliances are serviced annually.

2.4 Regulation 36 and 36A of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 details landlords' duties in respect of gas safety.

2.4.1 There are two main duties on a landlord: annual safety checks on gas appliances and flues (and that a record is kept and issued, or in certain cases, displayed to tenants) and ongoing maintenance.

2.4.2 A Landlord must also ensure that there is no gas fitting of a type that would contravene regulation 30 fitted in any room occupied or to be occupied as sleeping accommodation.

2.5 Appendix 1 – Details the other statutory responsibilities and duties that Arches are aware of and comply with as part of this policy through the appointed contractor.

2.6 All landlords have a legal responsibility to comply with these regulations, which are enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and detailed in their Approved Code of Practice L56 (fifth edition).

2.7 Arches will meet the Regulatory requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard which includes meeting all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of our customers in their

homes in relation to gas and the requirement from 1st October 2022 that all homes have a carbon monoxide detector (which is maintained and /or replaced if informed and found they are faulty) in any living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers) and ensure at least one smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of homes where there is a room used as living accommodation.

3 Statement of Intent

3.1 There are risks associated with gas installations/appliances through leaks of natural gas, which is highly flammable and explosive, and carbon monoxide which is toxic and potentially fatal if build-ups occur.

3.2 Arches are committed to ensuring the safety of our tenants, staff and any others who may be affected by the installation of gas appliances, associated flues and pipework in properties that we own or have a responsibility for managing.

3.4 Arches require our contractors to abide by all relevant legislation and technical guidance and keep up to date with any amendments.

3.5 Any contractor undertaking works to a gas supply or appliance must be registered through the 'Gas Safe Register'. Individual engineers must be registered, trained and appropriately qualified to work on specific gas appliances and installations.

4 Gas Safety Policy

4.1 We will carry out our responsibilities and obligations as set out below:

- Ensure annual landlord gas safety checks are carried out between two months before the 12 month anniversary and the date of the 12-month anniversary of the last gas service and records are kept and issued to tenants by a registered Gas Safe contractor
- We have worked with our contractor and adopted "MOT" style gas servicing programme where appropriate
- Our contractor will complete water testing to check water inhibitor testing in closed systems as part of the changes to Building Regulations Part L
- Annual checks of carbon monoxide and smoke detectors will be included as part of the gas safety check to meet the requirements of the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulation 2022. Any detector found to be within 10 months of its anniversary date will be replaced during the visit to carry out the gas safety check
- Ensure a landlord gas safety check is carried out at each new or change of Arches tenancy including mutual exchange and a copy of the appropriate certification (Landlord Gas Safety Record - LGSR) issued to the new tenant.

- Ensure that any gas appliance, pipework or flue is repaired and maintained to approved standards and compliant with manufacturer's recommendations and specifications in compliance with Regulation 26:9 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and approved codes of practice and guidance.
- Procure and manage contractors on the gas process in line with the gas process map for no access with minimum three attempts by contractor through to consideration of use of legal process, cap off and controlled access
- Unsafe situations will be actioned by the engineer in accordance with Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure
- Visual only checks will be carried out on tenants own appliances; warning notices will be issued and disconnection if applicable along with advice to the tenant from the Gas Safe Engineer
- Keep detailed computerised information (for at least 2 years) of all landlords' gas safety records and monitor performance to ensure that every effort is made to maintain 100% compliance
- Reconcile our records with those held by the contractor on a quarterly basis
- Validate annually each asset which Arches identifies as not requiring a gas safety check to ensure our data is correct
- Ensure a gas safety check is carried out annually on all capped off supplies and a Landlord Gas Safety Record issued and held to confirm the status of "capped off" by a gas safe engineer
- Carry out monthly customer contact checks on tenanted properties where gas is capped off to ensure no change
- The Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) will include details of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and data checked and recorded on our system to ensure compliance with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulation 2022
- Issue tenants with a copy of the annual Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) within 28 days of it being completed
- Provide a copy of the landlord gas safety record to individual tenants at sites or display in communal area where checks relate to communal systems
- Encourage staff to be alert to the danger signs from gas appliances as part of their routine duties and visits and have a clear process for reporting concerns
- Ensure a valid gas safety certificate is provided as part of completion of sale for shared ownership or shared equity products

4.2 Arches shall not be guilty of an offence by reason of contravention of regulation under Regulation 39 Exception as to liability for regulations 30 (insofar as it relates to the installation of a gas fire, other gas space heater or a gas water heater of more than 14 kilowatt gross heat input) or 36 (annual safety checks on gas appliances

and flues and ongoing maintenance) in any case in which we can show and satisfy a court that we took all reasonable steps to prevent that contravention.

5. Gas Competency and Training

5.1 Only Gas Safe registered engineers appropriately qualified will be permitted to carry out gas repairs and safety testing in Arches properties.

5.3 Checks of qualifications being live and in date registered on the Gas Safe Register for key engineers on Arches contract will be carried out monthly.

5.4 The Compliance Officer and or the Responsive Repairs Manager will be qualified to VRQ Level 4 in gas safety management; where this is not held by the current post holder (during periods of staff turnover or whilst training being undertaken) a consultant will be engaged who is competent and qualified to offer independent advice to this level for staff at Arches to be able to access.

5.5 Our gas contractor will be provided with a copy of this policy and any subsequent updates within 7 working days of its approval.

5.6 All contractors will comply with relevant regulations and use information made available to them through this policy (including process maps) to assist them to adhere to our gas safety policy.

5.7 All relevant staff will attend a suitable training course on a regular basis ensuring adequate information, instruction and training is given on Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 for their role.

5.8 All staff will be trained on the contents of our Gas Safety Policy at regular intervals.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive and ultimately the Board have overall responsibility for the Gas Safety Policy but delegate actions to the Duty Holder and other responsible staff. These actions also relate to contractors acting on behalf of Arches. Key actions are set out below;

- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated to managing the risks and legal responsibilities relating to gas safety
- Ensuring adequate processes and procedures are in place to manage the risks and legal obligations relating to gas safety
- Ensuring sufficient information, instruction and training is carried out
- Monitoring the performance of staff and contractors
- Reporting any material breach of non-compliance of the Safety and Quality Standard to the Board and the Regulator of Social Housing

- Ensuring that members of the public, staff and contractors are not unnecessarily exposed to risk
- Ensuring that Arches complies with its overall legal duties in relation to gas safety and Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulation 2022

6.2 Head of Asset Management – 'Duty Holder'

The Head of Asset Management, reporting to the Director of Operations shall serve as the Gas Safety 'Duty Holder' and be responsible for the strategic management of gas safety within Arches Housing, reporting directly to the Chief Executive and shall:

- Formulate and revise Arches policy
- Facilitate audits to ensure that the provisions within the Gas Safety policy are being met
- Ensure that gas safety policies and procedures are maintained and up to date
- Report to the Chief Executive and the Executive Leadership Team any material breach of the Regulator of Social Housing's Regulatory Standards relating to gas safety
- Ensure gas safety related incidents are reported, investigated and controls introduced to reduce the risk of such accidents recurring
- Ensure risks arising from gas safety are recorded reviewed and mitigated
- Ensure adequate training is maintained to effectively manage a gas safety regime
- Appoint a designated deputy (Head of Asset Management – Responsible Person) to provide cover in their absence
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of legislative requirements and best practice
- Ensure all relevant staff receive adequate information, instruction and training. This includes the provision of regular refresher training to maintain skills

6.3 The Responsive Repairs Manager – 'Responsible Person'

The 'Responsible Person' is the Responsive Repairs Manager, who with the support of the Compliance Officer is responsible for the day to day running and implementation of the Gas Safety Policy, and they will:

- Provide advice on the application of this policy on an individual case by case basis

- Ensure that all assets designated as requiring a landlord gas safety check has received one on an annual basis in line with Regulation 36A of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Ensure that systems are in place to record presence of carbon and smoke detectors in line with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulation 2022
- Ensure systems in place for appropriate gas checks at change of tenant and mutual exchange
- Manage the gas contractor on a day-to-day basis and feedback to the Head of Asset Management and issues or concerns in relation to the adherence to this policy
- Report to the Head of Asset Management any non-compliance of less than 100% of valid gas safety certificates for all properties that require one which would be a breach of the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard and Regulation 36 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Report to the Head of Asset Management any breach of Health and Safety legislation or incident of s that are reportable for gas safety under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Be the business owner of the data within the systems that feed the gas servicing regime, ensuring robust processes are in place for validation of data
- Be the business owner for the KPIs that evidence compliance with the legal responsibilities of Arches for Gas Safety
- Provide gas safety related information to staff, contractors, tenants and members of the public as required
- Ensure adequate training is maintained organisationally and in accordance with current regulations
- Appoint a designated deputy as appropriate to provide cover in their absence

7. Employees

7.1 All Employees, irrespective of their position shall:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be adversely affected by gas safety, including members of the public, tenants, visitors and contractors
- Have a responsibility to report to the Responsive Repairs Manager, Compliance Officer or any member of the Asset Team any concerns over gas safety that they may become aware of during a routine visit or inspection

- Co-operate as appropriate with other staff and agencies to ensure compliance with this policy and all other legal requirements
- Report any concerns that they may have in relation to the management of gas safety and compliance with Arches legal obligations or this policy to the Head of Asset Management or Chief Executive

8. Tenants and Leaseholders

8.1 Tenants

In undertaking our duties, we will ensure that General Needs and Supported Housing tenants are aware of their responsibilities including:

- Allowing access to enable the landlord gas safety check to be undertaken
- Acting in accordance with their tenancy agreement in respect of any repairs that relate to gas and immediately reporting any concerns with gas appliances, flues or installation pipework, turning off gas appliances with hazardous situations and keeping them turned off until check have been carried out by a competent person
- Not undertaking, arranging or allowing work on gas installations in any Arches General Needs or Supported Housing property by those who are not Gas Safe registered and without Arches express permission
- Being responsible for finding out what their obligations are and maintaining their own appliances in a safe order and good state of repair
- Use a gas safe engineer to connect or disconnect a gas cooker
- Operating appliances in a safe manner and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions
- Tenants must not arrange or attempt to uncap a gas supply capped off by Arches, they must contact Arches about this
- Tenants must not use alternative fuel sources other than portable electric heaters for heating where gas is the primary heating system without requesting permission from Arches (permission may not always be granted)
- Not tampering with the smoke and carbon monoxide detector(s) in the property and reporting to Arches any concerns about this not working
- Being familiar with gas safety advice given at sign up and published on the association's website

8.2 Leaseholders and shared owners

Leaseholders and Shared Owners are not the responsibility of Arches for the purposes of undertaking annual gas safety checks, as the responsibility for these remain with the leaseholder/shared owner.

Appropriate certification for the gas installation will be issued at the point of completion on new properties to leaseholders and shared owners.

9. Contractors

9.1 Non gas contractors are required to immediately report any gas safety related risks or concerns to the Head of Asset Management or their deputy.

10. Communication

10.1 Each Arches tenant will be notified in advance of an appointment for a landlord gas safety check or gas repair in writing to their home address.

10.2 Text messages and/or phone calls may also be used to act as reminders of appointments as an additional form of communication

10.3 Each tenant will have the opportunity to rearrange appointments made where these are not suitable, however Arches will operate a zero-tolerance approach to out-of-date landlord gas safety checks. If a tenant does not allow access in a reasonable time Arches will follow its access procedure to cap off the supply to the property or gain access to the property until a landlord gas safety check could be carried out

10.4 Gas related articles produced in newsletters, through social media etc will promote to tenants the importance of gas safety and the need for access for annual gas safety checks and stress the legal obligations we adhere to

10.5 Information about Gas Safety will be published on our website

11. Review

11.1 This Policy shall be reviewed and updated by the Gas Safety Duty Holder (Head of Asset Management) on a Biennial basis or, if there are any significant changes to current Gas Safety Legislation. It will also be reviewed after any serious gas safety incident or if any reason comes to light to suggest that the Gas Safety Policy is inadequate.

12. Governance, Assurance and External Validation

12.1 Compliance with Arches legal responsibility in relation to Gas Safety will be reported to board quarterly.

12.2 Compliance is monitored by the Responsive Repairs Manager and Head of Asset Management. Where non-compliance is identified in the first instance there is an agreed appropriate course of corrective action put in place with the operational

team to address the non-compliance issue. If this is not resolved to agreed timescales, details of the matter will be escalated to the Chief Executive.

12.3 The Chief Executive or the Director of Operations will make the Board aware of any serious non-compliance issue so they can consider the implications and take action as appropriate which will include whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing in the spirit of co-regulation, or any other relevant organisation such as the HSE, BSR, etc., as part of the Regulatory Framework

12.4 Key Performance Indicators on Gas Safety will be reported to the board of management quarterly:

- The number of properties that require a Landlords Gas Safety Record (LGSR) - all homes and buildings managed or owned by the organisation
- The number and percentage of properties 'at risk' and without a valid Landlords Gas Safety Record (LGSR) for all homes and buildings managed or owned by the organisation.

12.5 Independent external assurance will be sought periodically but no less than every 3 years to ensure compliance with Arches legal responsibility in relation to Gas Safety.

12.6 A quality control regime is in place to assess the quality of gas repairs and landlord safety checks across Arches stock, this will be reviewed annually. 5% of all services will be audited on an annual basis by an independent organisation who has Gas Safe accredited engineers

12.7 All LGSR's will be checked by the Compliance Officer or Administrator in their absence before loading on our system

13. Equality and Diversity

13.1 All involved will recognise their ethical and a legal duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination on the grounds of, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership.

14. Publicising this Policy

14.1 The policy relating to gas safety will be publicised on the Arches Website.

Appendix 1

There are other statutory responsibilities and duties that Arches are aware of and comply with as part of this policy through the appointed contractor.

These are contained in the following legislation:

2.5.1 HSE legislation; Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act),Pipelines Safety Regulations 1996 (PSR), Gas Safety (Management) Regulations 1996 (as amended) (GSMR), Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (WHSR), Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR), Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER), Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM), Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 (PSSR), Health and Safety (Safety Signs and

Signals) Regulations 1996 (SSR), Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR), Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

2.5.2 Other legislation; Gas Acts 1986 and 1995 (GA) and Gas Appliances (Safety) Regulations 1995 (GASR), Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulation 2022, Part L Building Regulations