



GAS SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES (2017) **(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES)**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to ensure that the gas boilers, fires and flues that the Association provides for tenants' use are maintained in a safe condition at all times. It covers the following areas:-

- ✓ The Association's Responsibilities
- ✓ The Contractor's Responsibilities
- ✓ The Competence of the Contractor
- ✓ The Gas Appliance Register
- ✓ Annual Safety Inspection
- ✓ The Association's Non Access Procedures
- ✓ Gas Repairs
- ✓ New Developments
- ✓ Component Replacements
- ✓ Quality Control
- ✓ Responsibility
- ✓ Policy Review

2.0 THE ASSOCIATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Key Legislation

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998: Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure 4th Edition.

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 came into force on 31st October 1998 and covers a wide range of issues connected with the installation and use of gas appliances. However, under the terms of this legislation, the Association's specific responsibilities for its rented properties (excluding shared ownership) are as follows:

- ✓ Existing Properties
Complete a Landlord's Annual Gas Safety Record for the inspection of gas appliances, pipe work and flues provided by the Association within each 12 month period.
- ✓ New Properties
Complete a Landlord's Annual Gas Safety Record for the inspection of all gas appliances, pipe work and flues provided by the Association in recently completed property within 12 months of practical completion.

✓ Before Occupation

Complete a Gas Safety Inspection before a tenant moves into a property (a CP4 certificate) unless an annual inspection is being arranged or is due within 6 weeks, in which case the completion of the Landlord's Annual Gas Safety Record will be brought forward.

✓ Information to Tenants

Provide a copy of the certificate to the tenants of inspected properties within 28 days of the safety check

✓ Records

Keep all Certificates for a minimum of 2 years after the date of completion.

✓ Certified Contractor

Ensure that all work carried out on the Association's behalf to gas appliances or flues is carried out by a Registered Gas Installer or Registered Contractor.

Make a copy of the certificate available for inspection by any lawful occupier of the inspected property at reasonable notice and provide a copy of the certificate to the tenant when it is issued.

The Health and Safety Executive appointed GAS SAFE on 1st April 2009 to manage and certify the registers of installers and contractors.

The Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure 4th Edition has significant implications for the Association's properties which contain a back boiler and gas fire. The legislation brings additional requirements for ventilation caused by the recalculation of ventilation requirements. The Association manages the implications of this legislation with the window and boiler replacement programme. If required, the boiler replacement is brought forward.

In addition, the Association provides both written and verbal instruction on heating and gas safety advice to all new tenants through demonstrations of safe use of systems and in the Tenant's Handbook

3.0 THE CONTRACTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Contractors' responsibilities emanate from the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 and the Association's current gas contract which state that:-

- ✓ All engineers working on the Association's appliances are appointed by a Contractor who has been appointed by the Association.
- ✓ 24 hour cover is provided for the maintenance of the Association's gas appliances and flues.
- ✓ A safety check and service on the Associations gas appliances is carried out within a 12 month period. The contractor must also ensure that a battery powered carbon monoxide detector (BS 7860 certified) is installed and have the battery renewed when the annual safety check and service is being carried out. New boilers are sealed units and therefore there is no legal requirement to

provide a carbon monoxide detector. However the Association will continue to provide and maintain existing detectors in the interest of general safety including tenants' cooking appliances.

- ✓ A safety check and servicing programme will be provided by the Contractor to the Association at least two months prior to the first safety check and service.
- ✓ Regular reports, including formal monthly reports and daily electronic updates will be received during the safety check and servicing programme period. Details on the units completed, non access to property and planned dates for the outstanding appliances will be provided to the Association by the Contractor.
- ✓ The Contractor will provide certificates and job sheets which will be submitted within 7 days of any work being carried out.
- ✓ The Contractor is required to advise the Association immediately when an unsafe appliance is identified. The Contractor will apply a warning label to the unsafe appliance. The label should not be removed until repairs are complete.
- ✓ When working on the Association's appliances the Contractor will at all times comply with legislation and amend practices and procedures in accordance with changing legislation.
- ✓ The Contractor will attend monthly meetings with the Association.
- ✓ The Contractor will carry out a visual check on gas appliances and flues provided by the tenant and will report on the condition of appliances to the tenant and the Association. Any unsafe appliance should have warning labels attached. The tenant will be advised that the labels should not be removed until repairs are complete. They will also be advised of the action that they should take to rectify the fault. Quality assurance checks will focus on these properties.
- ✓ The contractor will provide a form which will record:
 - ❖ the date the appliance was checked
 - ❖ the address of the installation(s)
 - ❖ the name and address of the Association
 - ❖ a description of the location of each appliance and flue checked
 - ❖ any defects identified
 - ❖ any remedial action taken
 - ❖ the effectiveness of the flue
 - ❖ the supply of air
 - ❖ the operating pressure
 - ❖ the heat input
 - ❖ the safe functioning of the appliance
 - ❖ the name and signature of the operative completing the check
 - ❖ the Gas Safe (formerly CORGI) registration number of the operative or his/her employee

4.0 THE COMPETENCE OF THE CONTRACTOR

The Association only approves competent contractors for the gas servicing contract or the installation of new appliances. In order that this objective can be achieved, all potential contractors will be required to complete a questionnaire before being accepted on the tender list. The contract will be procured in accordance with the Association's Corporate Procurement Policy.

To ensure that the Association is satisfied that the gas contractor's operatives are competent, the Association will carry out the following checks:

- ✓ Check the Contractors' operatives GAS SAFE registration by phoning the Council For Registered Gas Installers GAS SAFE direct and by obtaining a copy of their Council For Registered Gas Installers GAS SAFE registration
- ✓ Ensure that all engineers working on the Association's appliances have the appropriate Accepted Certificate of Competence.
- ✓ The Association will obtain written confirmation from the Contractor that no unregistered engineer will work on the Association's appliances.
- ✓ Copies of the engineer's qualifications will be held in a central file at the Association's Offices.

The contractor method statements and procedures will be checked by a qualified third party appointed by the Association.

5.0 THE GAS APPLIANCE REGISTER

The Association will hold centrally on computer a register of gas appliances. The register will detail:

- ✓ A description of the appliance
- ✓ Date of installation
- ✓ Servicing history

6.0 ANNUAL SAFETY INSPECTIONS

The Association will take the following steps to ensure that annual inspections can be carried out on all appliances within a 12 month period:

- ✓ The contractor will prepare and agree with the Association a programme of inspection and servicing at least 2 months before the first service is due. In cases where the tenant has historically presented difficulties in obtaining access for gas servicing, efforts to gain access will commence earlier.
- ✓ A timetable for the completion of the contract is agreed.
- ✓ The first visit is scheduled to take place 2 months prior to expiry of certificate. The Contractor will contact the tenant directly in writing and leave a postcard if the visit is unsuccessful, and advise the Association, who will then commence the

“No Access” procedure. The Association will contact the tenant in writing by means of the letter(s) attached as **Appendices 2, 3 and 4**. These letters emphasise the legal requirement to permit access and the safety reasons for doing so. The contractor may make evening or weekend appointments available at the contractor’s discretion and at no additional cost to the Association.

- ✓ The contractor and the Association will retain records of all communication with the tenant as these may be required to demonstrate all reasonable efforts have been made prior to seeking legal measures to force access (see no access procedure, below)
- ✓ A procedure for non access is agreed with the Contractor.
- ✓ The contractor will be entitled to charge the Association for visits following evidence that they have arranged and made 3 unsuccessful visits. These charges will be recharged to the tenant.
- ✓ A maximum number of visits per day for each engineer will be eight. The maximum visits per day will be dependent on the type and number of appliances with the premises.
- ✓ That there is an agreed procedure for remedial work.

7.0 VOID PROPERTIES

The Association will instruct a Gas Safety check on all void properties, as set out in the Reactive Maintenance Policy.

8.0 THE ASSOCIATION'S NON ACCESS PROCEDURES

The Association’s procedures to secure access to a property in the event of non-access are outlined in **Appendix 1**. The Association’s contractor will absorb the cost of 3 arranged visits and will charge further visits to the Association. The Association will pass on these costs to the tenant in the form of a recharge.

✓ **Disconnection of Supply**

The majority of the Association’s properties have an external gas meter. It is the preference of the Association to cap gas meters rather than force entry as this achieves gas safety without compromising the privacy of the household. The household will be advised by letter when this action has been followed.

(Appendix 7)

✓ **Forced Entry**

As a final mechanism to ensure the Association’s compliance with its statutory obligations, it will force entry to carry out a service. Every effort will be made to avoid this, through written correspondence and other appropriate methods of communication which are outlined in **Appendix 1**.

At least 7 days’ notice will be given to the tenant of the Association’s intention to force entry. Copies of the letter advising of a forced entry will be posted normal 1st class and also hand delivered by a Housing Services Officer. These letters

will note the Association's intention to gain entry by force if no access is provided on a specified date and time, the consequences and costs associated with non-cooperation and also the tenant's legal obligations under their tenancy agreement with the Association.

The Director will authorise forced entry (**Appendix 8**).

The Association will reinstate the security of the property, change locks and leave a note pinned to the door advising of the action that has taken place (**Appendix 6**). Keys will be left outside office hours at the nearest Police station, if possible. The Association will force access no later than Tuesday of each week to maximise opportunity for the tenant to contact the Association during working hours.

The Association will seek a warrant for non-SST rented tenure households.

The Association will recover costs of any legal action and forced access through the Recharge Procedure.

Where, following forced entry, the gas/electric meters are in debt and therefore preventing the service being undertaken, the meter will be disconnected by the Association to prevent further use of the gas supply until a service takes place. A notice will be pinned to the door advising the household of the action that has been taken (**Appendix 7**).

The Association will suspend the forced access procedure if the tenant indicates that access will be granted by consent. If the tenant makes, then breaks an arrangement for access, the Association will continue to the next stage as if no arrangement had been made.

Where Housing Services staff believe a property has been abandoned, and serve the appropriate Notice, they will inform Technical Services staff in order that efforts to secure access can be coordinated. Where a gas service falls due after the service of the first abandonment notice, the Association will force entry for the purpose of securing the property and fixtures against vandalism.

✓ **Disconnected Properties**

The Association will continue to attempt to establish or maintain contact with disconnected households and will contact Social Services to advise them of households which have been disconnected.

Arrangements will be made with the tenant of a disconnected property to reconnect the supply and undertake a service.

9.0 GAS REPAIRS

Tenants report any gas repairs directly to the Association's office or to the gas service contractor direct out with office hours.

The Tenant's Handbook will include a section on Gas Safety and will advise a tenant to notify Scotland Gas Networks (formerly Transco) immediately of any suspected gas leak.

The gas service contractor will visit the property, following any attendance by Scotland Gas Networks to assess the problem and repair any faults.

A job sheet will be submitted to the Association and the details will be logged onto the repairs history for that property for record purposes.

The Association must ensure that any outstanding problems highlighted on the job sheet are followed, where applicable, examined including:

- ✓ The effectiveness of any flue
- ✓ The supply of combustion air
- ✓ Its operating pressure and heat input
- ✓ Its operation so as to ensure its safe functioning

10.0 NEW DEVELOPMENTS

The Association receives a Practical Completion certificate for each property at handover.

Commissioning information, including the Benchmark Book, is passed from the Sub-contractor to the Main Contractor and is retained by the Association on the Health and Safety File.

11.0 COMPONENT REPLACEMENTS

In accordance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (as amended) – Technical Handbooks a Carbon Monoxide detection system will be installed.

12.0 QUALITY CONTROL

In order to monitor the performance of all gas servicing engineers and the gas servicing contracts the Association will:

- ✓ Ensure that a 10% quality control on servicing and day to day repairs is carried out by the Contractor at the expense of the Contractor. Details of each inspection will be supplied to the Association on a quarterly basis.
- ✓ Set up a monitoring system to ensure that their 10% targets are being met
- ✓ Employ a suitably qualified person to carry out third party quality control on 10% of works carried out by passing 10% of each batch of certificates received to the Quality Assurance Contractor to carry out an independent inspection of the main contractor's servicing practices. The Association will employ a Quality Assurance Contractor to check 10% of the work carried out by the Contractor.
- ✓ Hold monthly meetings with the contractor to discuss the findings of the internal and external quality control and other aspects of the contract that may arise.

- ✓ Post inspections undertaken by the Technical Services Officer (Inspections) will include work undertaken by gas contractors.

In the event of a grievance arising from the monitoring process or where discrepancies and deficiencies are uncovered, the Association will require the contractor to instruct at the contractor's own cost, Gas Safe to carry out an investigation with all findings copied to the Association.

Any further action against the contractor will be considered by the Management Committee, following a report from the Head of Customer Services.

13.0 **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Gas Safety Policy should identify persons responsible for the policy's implementation and their specific responsibilities. They are as follows:

The Gas Administrator role will be undertaken by the Assistant Technical Services Manager and will involve:

- ✓ Maintaining a record of all gas appliances installed in the Association's managed properties, their previous service date, and copies of landlord's paper gas safety certificates, or approved electronic certificates. This will be the master copy of information from which budgets and the annual planned servicing programme will be derived.
- ✓ Ensuring that an annual service and safety check is carried out on all gas appliances in the Association's tenanted properties and in all properties managed by the Association. This obligation will be met through the implementation of a planned service programme. Void properties will also be serviced prior to commencement of any new tenancies.
- ✓ Ensure quarterly reports are compiled which advise of the number of properties with current gas safety certificates

Task	Job Holder Responsible
1. Ensuring that a copy of the contractors GAS SAFE (Council For Registered Gas Installers) registration is verified by GAS SAFE.	Technical Services Officer (Contracts)
2. Ensuring that all the contractor's engineers' ACCC (Accepted Certificate of Competences) certificates are received.	Technical Services Officer (Contracts)
3. Signing the Gas Contract.	Secretary and two members of the Management Committee
4. Ensuring that the service programme is received 2 months before the servicing commences.	Technical Services Officer (Contracts)
5. Ensuring that the specified volume of quality control is carried out by the contractor.	Technical Services Officer (Contracts)
6. Issuing and Checking the landlord	Assistant Technical Services Officer

certificates, the work orders and the Quality Control Sheets.	
7. Examining, checking and filing certificates	Assistant Technical Services Officer
8. Ensuring that landlord certificates and job sheets are submitted on a regular basis	Assistant Technical Services Officer
9. Post inspection surveys of the contractors work on site	Gas Quality Assurance Contractor
10. Ensuring that the gas register is kept up to date.	Assistant Technical Services Officer
11. Ensuring that the Committee are given an annual report on the gas safety checks /servicing completed and the level of non access	Head of Customer Services
12. Ensuring that all of the above is complied with	Director

14.0 **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be subject to review at least every three years.

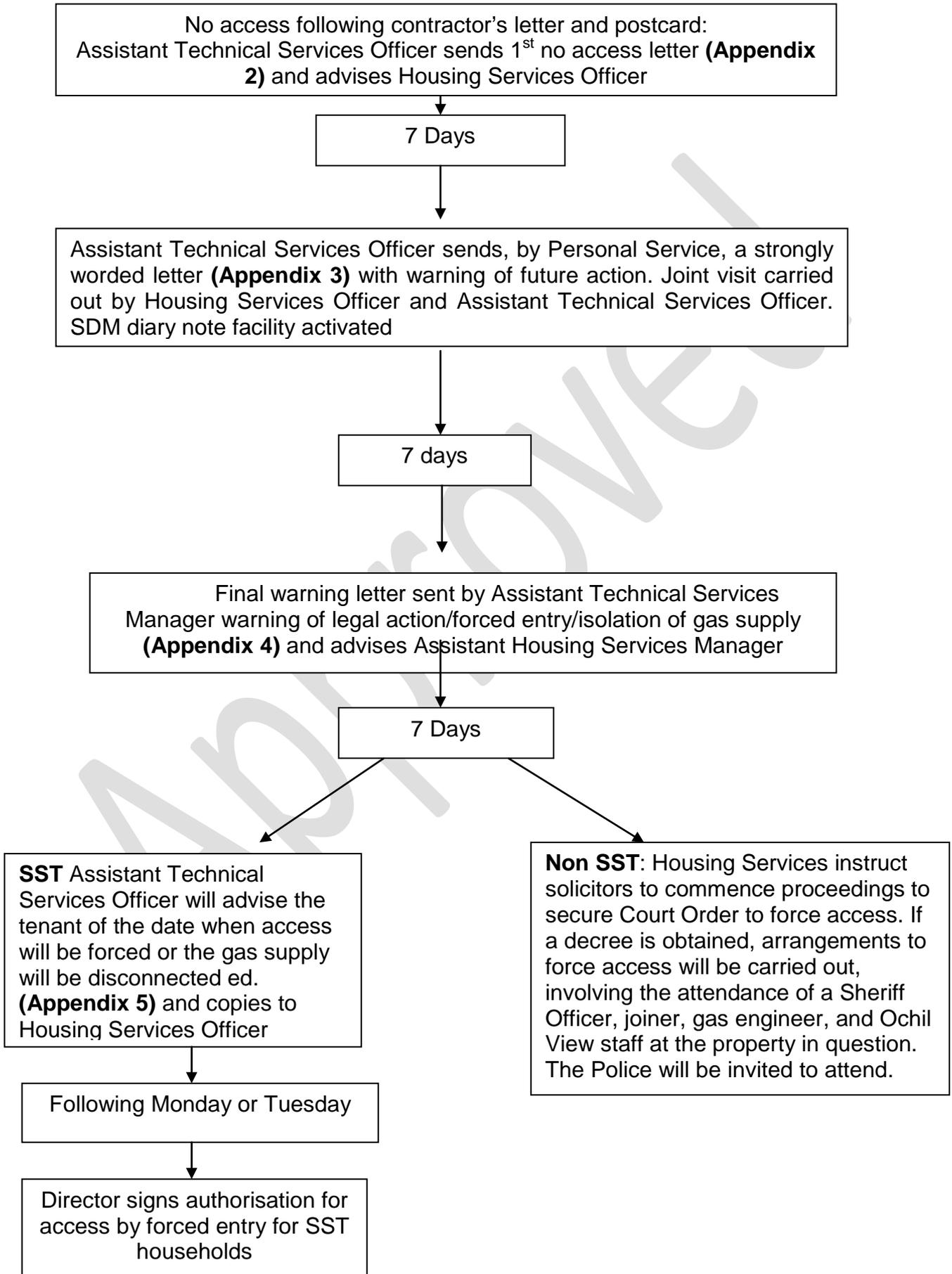
George Tainsh
Director

8th February 2017

Policy Consultation and Review Process:

Reviewed by the Assistant Technical Services Manager	8 th February 2017
Considered by the HSEHR Committee	16 th February 2017
APPROVED BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	30th MARCH 2017
Date of Next Review	February 2020

NON ACCESS PROCEDURES



First letter from the Association (following 1 abortive call by contractor and no response to postcard left.)

Dear Tenant

Annual Gas Service

The Association's Gas Maintenance Contractor (**Name**) has informed the Association that they have recently been unable to obtain access to your home in order to carry out the Annual Gas Service, which is now due (as it was last done on **Date**).

It is a legal requirement and therefore imperative that this service be carried out as soon as possible, for safety reasons and legal compliance. Please therefore contact the Association immediately, on 01259 722899, in order to arrange a suitable access time. Please note that, once a suitable access time has been agreed with you, you will be recharged if access is not provided,

If the Association does not hear from you within 7 days of this letter it will have no alternative but to consider further action for access, as stated in your tenancy agreement. In cases where the Association has difficulty in gaining access, it will take action to enter your home and complete the service. Your tenancy agreement explains the Association's rights to access your home, after giving you notice of its intention. All costs incurred will be recovered from you. Please help to avoid the need for this by contacting the Association to arrange a time.

Your co-operation in this matter is greatly appreciated and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Assistant Technical Services Officer

Strongly worded letter from the Association (following no response to first Ochil View Housing Association letter)

Dear Tenant

Annual Gas Service

Ochil View Housing Association's Gas Contractor (**Name**) has recently been unable to gain access to your home in order to carry out the Annual Service of your gas heating system (& appliances), which was last serviced on **Date**. You failed to provide access on **Date** (the date of a previously arranged appointment) and will receive an invoice from the Association for this unsuccessful visit.

The Association is required by Health and Safety Legislation to carry out an inspection of the gas heating systems within its housing stock at least once every 12 months. Unless access is made available the Association will take the view that the gas installations may present a potential hazard to the health and safety of you and neighbouring tenants and this constitutes a situation requiring emergency access.

In these circumstances the Association is entitled to access to your property. Unless you contact this office within 7 days from the date of this letter, to arrange an appointment for access, action will be initiated to (non SST: obtain a court order to) force access or disconnect your gas supply. You will be charged for costs arising from this action.

Please ensure that there is sufficient credit on your gas and electricity meters for the service to be undertaken.

We trust this will not be necessary and would now ask you to contact Ochil View Housing Association on 01259 722899 as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

Technical Services Officer (Contracts)

Final Warning letter from the Association (prior to beginning legal action)

Dear **(Name)**

Annual Gas Safety Inspection

The Association has tried on at least 3 occasions to gain access to your home to service your gas central heating system. You have not provided access as requested.

This annual gas safety inspection is required by law and your Tenancy Agreement. By not allowing the inspection to take place, you are putting you and other occupiers of the house in danger of Carbon Monoxide poisoning.

A further attempt to gain access and carry out the inspection will be made at **(date)** and **(time)**. Please ensure that both your gas and electricity meters contain sufficient credit for the check to be undertaken. If we are unable to gain access we will (non SST: seek a court order to allow us to) force access to your home or disconnect your gas supply. You will be responsible for the costs of this legal action and the costs of forcing entry.

We sincerely hope this will not be necessary and urge you to contact the Association immediately to confirm you will keep the appointment noted above.

Yours sincerely,

Head of Customer Services

Letter notifying tenant of proposed forced entry delivered by hand

Dear

GAS SAFETY CHECK – FORCED ENTRY/DISCONNECTION OF SUPPLY

Address:

We refer to previous correspondence regarding the above and note that you have not provided access for this work to be undertaken.

Arrangements have now been made for our Gas Engineer to access your property and undertake the safety check or disconnect your gas supply on **dd/mm/yy at hh/mm.**

Staff from the Association's Property and Housing Services will be in attendance. Should access not be made available to us, our contractor will be instructed to open the door by forcing entry if necessary and/or to disconnect your gas supply. If we have to 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. Outwith working hours, you will need to phone police/out of hours contractor to obtain keys.

YOU WILL HAVE TO PROVIDE IDENTIFICATION IN ORDER FOR THE KEYS TO BE ISSUED TO YOU.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU WILL BE INVOICED FOR ALL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS WORK.

Director

Notice, on Ochil View headed paper, to be pinned to door following forced entry and lock change

ADDRESS

A service engineer has been unable to gain access to your home to service your gas appliance.

IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THIS WORK, ENTRY HAS NOW BEEN FORCED TO THE PROPERTY AND LOCKS HAVE BEEN CHANGED.

You may collect the new set of keys from your Housing Officer at Ochil House during office hours which are

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

Outwith office hours please contact the Police Station/Emergency Contractor on XXXX to collect your keys.

As you have repeatedly denied access to the Association, we do not accept responsibility for any inconvenience which you experience as a result of the lock change.

You should bring a form of identity with you as you will need to show this before the new keys are issued to you.

If your gas or electricity meter has run out of credit, the engineer will not have been able to undertake the service and will have disconnected your supply. Please ensure your meters have credit and phone the Association to arrange for your inspection to be undertaken.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF OCHIL VIEW HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Assistant Technical Services Manager

Notice, on Ochil View headed paper, to be hand delivered regarding disconnection of gas supply

ADDRESS

A service engineer has been unable to gain access to your home to service your gas appliance.

FOR SAFETY REASONS, THE GAS SUPPLY TO YOUR HOME HAS BEEN DISCONNECTED.

Please ensure that your meters are in credit and contact the Association to arrange for your service to be undertaken, our office hours are:

Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm

As you have repeatedly denied access to the Association, we do not accept responsibility for any inconvenience which you experience as a result of the isolation of your supply.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF OCHIL VIEW HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Assistant Technical Services Manager

Authorisation to force entry.

Authorisation for access by forced entry to carry out Gas Servicing Repairs

To the Director

The following SST tenant has failed on more than 3 arranged appointments to give us access to their home to enable us to carry out a gas service/safety check. Authorisation is sought to force entry to the property to carry out the outstanding work. 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 provided below, should the tenant continue to prevent access

Tenant name

Tenant address

Dates of Contractor arranged and failed appointments

Date of letter 1

Date of letter 2

Date of letter 3

Other communication with tenant in connection with gas service

I confirm that a signed copy of the SSTA is on file

Date of letter notifying date of proposed forced entry

Date and time of proposed forced entry

Signed

Assistant Technical Services Officer

Date