

Committee:	Tenants' and Leaseholders' Consultative Forum
Date:	28 th February 2008
Subject:	INFORMATION REPORT – Gas Safety Inspections – Progress Report
Responsible Officer:	Eddie Collier
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Camilla Bath
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out the background and current position of the council's Gas safety programme within HRA tenanted properties

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

Background

As landlord Harrow Council has a statutory duty to ensure that all gas appliances for which it is responsible are subject to an annual gas

safety check and that a valid gas safety certificate is issued.

On 2nd July 2007 responsibility for undertaking of the gas safety checks was passed to Kier Group Harrow (KGH) following its appointment as partnering contractor for the delivery of the responsive repairs service, statutory test and inspections and programmed maintenance.

Current situation

The HRA tenanted property stock included 4058 properties with gas services and appliances which KGH are contracted to service and check on Harrow's behalf.

The test and inspection regime is undertaken in accordance with an annual programme jointly agreed with Harrow Property Services to ensure all properties have been serviced, checked and provided with a new gas safety certificate (CP12) before the current certificate expires. This is a rolling programme that follows the history of the previous gas safety check regime.

Legal obligations:

Harrow is legally obligated, in accordance with its duties as landlord as specified in Regulation 36 'Duties of Landlords' of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, to take all reasonable steps to ensure safety checks are undertaken.

Responsibility for obtaining access to all properties requiring a gas safety check is delegated to KGH as Harrow's service provider. The procedure they are required to follow is prescribed under the partnering contract and outlined below:

- Make appointment for first visit

- Make the first visit and where access is not possible leave a letter or card requesting the tenant makes contact within 5 working days to arrange a suitable time for the gas service safety check.

- If no contact within 5 working days a letter is sent out with a second appointment.
- Make a second visit and where access is not possible leave a letter or card requesting the tenant makes contact within 5 working days to arrange a suitable time for the gas service safety check.
- If no contact is made a hand delivered Section 54 notice is delivered to the tenant giving a further appointment.
- If access is not gained then Section 54 notice is passed to the Resident Services for further action.

Tenants are advised that the Council's objective is to inspect the gas installation within their home for their safety and that of their neighbours. It is not the Council's wish or objective to take the tenant to court however it will do so if access is not provided.

Progress to Date

Currently, of the 4058 properties on the servicing programme 249 properties have an expired CP12 representing 6.1% of the Housing Stock. These properties are at various stages of 'no access' where unsuccessful attempts have been made by KGH to gain entry in accordance with the aforementioned access procedure.

Section 54 Notices are being served in accordance with the procedure in the Partnering Contract term brief. 72 Notices were served by 11/2/08 and KGH will be serving Notices on 89 of these dwellings by the end of February 2008. The remaining 88 premises will be issued with Section 54 notices in early March.

Performance management:

Clear communication is an important part of any contract management process and as are defined performance standards which are monitored and actions taken when required.

KGH report against the agreed programme on a weekly basis noting:

- Gas services completed against the programme

- Areas of no access
- Subsequent expired certificates

Current performance for gas servicing stands at 93.9% of all properties checked and provided with valid gas safety certificates against an annual target of 100%. A number of strategies will continue to be used to maximise access and reduce the numbers of premises without valid gas safety certificates further including extended hours and weekend working, incorporation of service visits when a repair received is made and call backs.

Communication with tenants

An article highlighting the issues of gas safety checks was published in "Homing in" the magazine distributed to Harrow tenants.

Financial Implications

The 07/08 revenue budget provision for cyclical servicing including gas safety inspections amounts to £300,000. Anticipated 07/08 outturn for boiler remedial works, renewal and replacements is an estimated £280,000.

Section 3 – Further Information

None

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

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Background Papers: None