

Solid Fuel Appliance Policy

1.0	SCOPE
	Purpose
1.1	whg has a strong commitment to cutting carbon emissions from our homes and office premises and in the long term we are phasing out solid fuel appliances wherever it is practical to do so. Where functioning solid fuel appliances are still in place, and whg are aware of them, we will ensure they are maintained and serviced regularly.
1.2	This policy sets out our approach to managing solid fuel appliances installed in whg rented homes. A solid fuel appliance refers to any appliance used to cook, heat or provide hot water to a property that burns a solid material as fuel. This includes open fires.
1.3	Our solid fuel appliance maintenance service will meet the high standards expected by our customers, provide value for money and protect the environment by avoiding unsustainably sourced fuels wherever possible and reducing the use of inefficient appliances.
	Legal and regulatory framework
1.4	Solid fuel appliances installed at whg rented homes will be serviced regularly. A full flue sweep, and appliance service will take place at the beginning and end of each winter heating period [approx. six months apart] in accordance with Health and Safety Legislation, the Heating Equipment Testing and Approval System (HETAS) recommendations and industry standards.
1.5	whg will carry out cyclical checks on all known, functioning solid fuel appliances and flue ways using only suitably accredited and qualified sub-contractors.
1.6	Where a functioning Carbon Monoxide detector is not fitted at the property the contractor will install a temporary detector and notify whg. We will then arrange for a hard-wired detector to be installed. If the Carbon Monoxide alarm sounds customers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not ignore the alarm.• Evacuate all persons in the household.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anyone is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning call 999. • Contact whg immediately. • Stop using the solid fuel appliance and maximise ventilation to the building.
1.7	whg will decommission and remove any redundant solid fuel appliances. High efficiency gas central heating will be offered in replacement for solid fuel back boilers or an electric fire and surround in replacement for solid fuel fires.
1.8	whg will decommission and remove any solid fuel appliance within a void property and ensure another suitable system is in place prior to the property being occupied.
1.9	Solid fuel appliances will only be repaired where it is cost effective to do so. In cases where the repair is deemed to be not cost effective or the system/appliance is deemed unsafe to use it will be condemned and removed and an alternative heating option offered.
1.10	In addition to maintaining appliances whg will offer advice and signposting for customers who consider themselves to be living in fuel poverty
2.0	POLICY STATEMENT
2.1.	<p>whg has the following responsibilities in regard to solid fuel appliances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring all existing solid fuel appliances that fall under our responsibility are kept in good working order and are safe to use. • Carrying out regular safety checks on appliances and heating systems ensuring all remedial work is completed to a high standard. • Take all reasonable steps to identify and report where customers have modified or installed solid fuel appliances without permission.
2.2.	<p>whg customers are responsible for the property they occupy and have the following responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating any existing solid fuel appliance safely and in the correct manner. Safe use of the appliance includes burning only approved materials that are not harmful to the environment, keeping ventilation clear and unobstructed and using a suitable fire guard. • Ensuring that whg is informed of defects to the appliance or flue ways and is given reasonable access in order to carry out any relevant works involved in the maintenance and safety checks of the appliance and chimney. • Seeking permission prior to making changes to their homes and heating systems.

2.3	Requests to install or reinstate solid fuel appliances will not be approved. Any solid fuel appliance installed by a customer where permission has not been obtained will result in the appliance being removed at the customer's expense including making good costs. Alternatively, an injunction may be sought requiring the tenant to arrange removal and make good at their own expense.
	Access
2.4	To ensure we can regularly gain access to service appliances and flue ways, whg will treat homes requiring a solid fuel appliance service in a similar way to homes requiring a gas service. Our approach to ensuring access to homes for gas servicing is set out in the Gas Service Access Policy
2.5	Whilst gas servicing takes place every 12 months, solid fuel appliance servicing will take place at 6 month periods. Full service of the appliance and flue sweep will take place at the start of the winter heating period (October), with a second flue inspection and sweep at the end of the winter heating period (March).
3.0	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
3.1.	whg will monitor repeated repairs on solid fuel appliances and carry out an assessment to ensure that future repairs provide value for money
3.2	whg will ensure the nominated specialist contractor undertaking these works complies with appropriate compliance and performance requirements.
4.0	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY
4.1	Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, a duty to ensure customers are not exposed to health and safety risks, all solid fuel appliances and their connecting chimneys are serviced and maintained twice a year. whg will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
5.0	TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION
5.1.	whg will ensure any contractors or staff appointed will hold relevant and up to date qualifications for the activities they will be carrying out. In addition, hold auditable records showing effective checks have been carried out to ensure the competence of any such person(s)
6.0	MONITOR AND REVIEW

6.1	This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Home Maintenance Services and reviewed every three years by the Policy Group.
7.0	ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
7.1	Documents, policies and procedures associated with this Policy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas Service Access Policy • Health and Safety Policy • Data Protection Policy • Customer Excellence Policy • Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as amended • The Environmental Act 1995 Solid Fuel Process Manual • The Equality Act 2010

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