Gas and heating safety policy – version 9.1

Date communicated for use:	Date of next review:
24th February 2026	March 2028

About this policy and who it is for

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to describe Dimensions' approach to ensuring that any heating appliance/s and pipework installed in premises occupied by Dimensions colleagues during their work is safe and without risks to health.

1.2 This policy makes clear Dimensions commitment to provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, a safe working environment for all the people we support, colleagues, visitors, and contractors.

1.3 This policy is to be implemented by:

- all Dimensions colleagues
- visitors
- contractors.

1.4 For the purpose of this policy, heating safety covers gas (natural gas and LPG), solid fuel, oil, renewable heating and unvented hot water storage.

1.5 This policy is a Dimensions Group policy. This means it applies to all its subsidiaries as listed in **Dimensions Policy Statements**. The document also contains details about, our regulators, equality, diversity and inclusion, data protection, and policy reviews.

The documents, forms and other policies mentioned in **bold** in this policy can be found on the Hub (Dimensions intranet).

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Policy statement (why we have this policy)

2.1 Dimensions recognises that gas and other heating appliances along with associated fittings that are not adequately safety checked, serviced or maintained can be a great risk to life and property. Current regulations place a duty on the persons responsible or in control of the property to ensure that any gas and heating fitting (including appliances and pipework) owned by them or situated in a property that they are in control of must be operated safely and without risk to health.

2.2 Dimensions acknowledges that it has a responsibility to protect the health and safety at work of its colleagues and of others who work at or visit premises over which Dimensions has control but may be owned by a third party.

2.3 The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 places a duty on landlords to arrange maintenance by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer for all relevant pipe work, appliances and flues which they own and provide for tenants' use. It also requires that landlords should arrange annual gas safety checks to be carried out every 12 months by a Gas Safe registered engineer. This can be carried out two months prior to the due date using a MOT style arrangement with the results, including and safety related defects, needing to be recorded on a Landlord Gas Safety Record.

2.4 Separate regulations, standards or best practice guidance outline similar duties for oil, solid fuel, renewable heating and unvented hot water storage.

2.5 In addition to these regulations the Quality Care Commission's (CQC) Fundamental Standards (regulation 15) sets a standard for the safety and suitability of premises. This is to ensure that people receive care in, work in or visit safe surroundings that promote their wellbeing.

2.6 Dimensions recognises that heating safety forms part of the arrangements needed to meet the standards and therefore requires this policy to be implemented.

The impact of not following this policy

3.1 Not meeting our responsibilities in relation to health and safety, may lead to:

- risk of harm or injury including death
- prosecutions
- enforcement action.

3.2 In addition, while health and safety duties are primarily placed on the organisation, individual Directors, Board Members, Trustees, senior managers and other similar officers may be held personally liable under Section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 if a health and safety offence takes place because of their actions, agreement, involvement, or failure to take reasonable steps to prevent it.

3.3 In such circumstances, both the individual and the organisation may be prosecuted, with potential penalties including fines, imprisonment and, in the case of Company Directors, disqualification from acting as a director.

3.4 The Health and Safety Executive or other regulators can take legal action to ensure our allocation of responsibilities is suitable and/or incur significant fines. A list of our regulators is available in **Dimensions Policy Statements**.

3.5 As a registered provider of social housing, Dimensions is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. Dimensions must comply with all the Regulatory Standards, including the 'Safety and Quality Standard.' This in turn incorporates the 'Decent Homes Standard'. Should Dimensions' homes fall below any of the required Standards, the Regulator may take action and require Dimensions to take steps to improve. This could damage Dimensions' reputation and potentially, even its ability to operate as a registered provider of social housing.

Policy content

Safety checks

4.1 Dimensions will ensure that all gas appliances, even those that are not legally owned by Dimensions, within properties that Dimensions Tenants reside, or colleagues work in are safety checked and serviced annually by a competent Gas Safe registered engineer. The same applies to properties with:

- an oil-fired boiler system. (See the Oil Fire Technical Association (OFTEC) website, **https://www.oftec.co.uk/**).
- a solid fuel heating system (See the HETAS website, **https://www.hetas.co.uk/**)
- unvented hot water storage (Building Regulation G3)
- renewable heating system (MCS certified or equivalent)

4.2 This includes properties owned by third parties. So, it may be necessary to work in partnership with a person's landlord to ensure the legal obligation for gas safety (and wider heating safety) is fully understood –

and, on occasion remind the landlord of its duty to make such arrangements.

4.3 Dimensions recognise that in some cases people we support may not appreciate the risks posed by inadequately maintained appliances. In these cases, colleagues should do all they reasonably can to help the person understand the importance of maintaining their appliance.

4.4 If the person we support prevents the gas or heating appliance or pipework being maintained safely, Dimensions may withdraw their services as we have a duty of care to ensure employees remain safe in their place of work.

4.5 The Group Head of Health and Safety or Regional H&S Advisor must be informed if it is suspected that any appliance in the property of a person we support is not being adequately maintained. In some cases, relocation of the service may be considered until the appliance has been properly serviced and is considered safe.

4.6 Any defects must be reported to the Manager of the Service. Any unsafe gas installation will be dealt with in accordance with the Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure and categorised as 'At Risk' or 'Immediately Dangerous'. These installations will either be remedied immediately or turned off/disconnected from the gas supply. Unsafe situations identified on other heating equipment will be dealt with in accordance with the guidance provided by the competent persons scheme provider.

4.7 For non-Dimension owned or managed properties, gas and heating safety certificates must be kept for a minimum of two years and stored in line with the **Standardised Filing System** (this can be electronic). The Locality Manager is responsible for maintaining a record of these checks.

4.8 For properties owned or leased by Dimensions, to ensure that the organisation maintain compliance with all relevant legislation, we will ensure that an accurate database of properties receiving heating safety checks is kept up to date. This will clearly determine what kind of heating equipment is in the properties so appropriate works orders can be raised. Compliance data for Dimensions owned properties must be kept for a minimum of two years and stored in SharePoint. The responsible person for maintaining and coordinating gas safety compliance is the Housing Compliance Manager. Coordinating gas safety compliance includes:

- arranging for gas and heating maintenance
- planned preventative maintenance
- performance reporting
- archiving of compliance

- liaising with Landlords to achieve all above for leased properties

4.9 Dimensions Housing Compliance Team will also carry out checks to ensure the engineer that has carried out the safety checks is, Gas Safe registered and competent to work on the appliances or pipework they are working on in Dimensions owned properties.

4.10 Dimensions appreciate that empty properties can bring rise to unnecessary risk from gas or other heating equipment. Therefore, we will ensure that installations are drained down and capped from their supplies where properties are completely empty. In situations where properties are vacant and void for disposal then we will engage guardians (temporary non-supported tenants, through our external partner Ad Hoc Property) to live there and keep the property in safe keeping. These arrangements will be managed by the Property Department.

4.11 Dimensions are aware that other trades working in our properties could inadvertently affect the integrity of the gas or other heating installation. It is therefore important to ensure that such contractors are conducting appropriate risk assessments to mitigate and eliminate such risk. Our colleagues will ensure that contractors conduct such risk assessment and take necessary action that arise from them. Copies of these risk assessments along with their competencies will be kept by the Property Department.

4.12 Dimensions will engage with a third-party safety consultant to conduct sample inspections of the work undertaken by the termed contractors to ensure high quality workmanship is being delivered in our properties.

4.13 For gas and other heating safety check procedures in properties owned by Dimensions, refer to Dimensions' Compliance Department (**housing.compliance@dimensions-uk.org**.

Location risk assessment

5.1 The manager of the service will ensure that the Location risk assessment identifies hazards and risk control measures to protect people we support and colleagues from gas appliances – for example, burns, carbon monoxide poisoning, fires. This includes risks posed by both fixed and portable appliances - for example, liquid petroleum gas heaters. **(See the Risk assessment policy**).

Emergencies

6.1 The Manager of the home or office should familiarise themselves with the location of the gas meter and how to turn the gas off in case of an emergency. The same applies to oil fired installations. Shut off valves must be kept free from obstructions and be easily accessible at all times.

This information should be included in the Location emergency plan. See **Emergency planning and response policy**.

Where shut off equipment is located in a shared buildings and where we do not have access, we must liaise with the responsible persons regarding the procedure for switching off the gas during an emergency, for example, for a suspected gas leak.

Carbon monoxide (CO)

7.1 Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colourless, odourless, tasteless and poisonous gas. So, you can't see it, smell it or taste it. It is produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels, including gas, oil, wood and coal. It is only when the fuel does not burn properly that excess CO is produced. When CO enters the body, it prevents the blood from bringing oxygen to cells, tissues and organs.

7.2 To comply with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022, Dimensions will ensure that a CO alarm is fitted in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers). But alarms should not be considered a replacement for regular maintenance and safety checks by a Gas Safe or OFTEC registered engineer. Ensure that the CO alarm complies with British standard EN 50291 and is installed and maintained in line with the manufacturers' instructions.

CO alarms should be positioned in accordance with the alarm manufacturer's installation instructions. In general, Carbon Monoxide alarms should be positioned at head height, either on a wall or a shelf, approximately 1-3 meters away from the potential source.

7.3 CO alarms are to be tested monthly and recorded on Radar. There is a scheduled task for Carbon Monoxide checks to be carried out. You can carry out the test by pressing the test button on the monitor or follow the manufacturer's instructions. Batteries are to be replaced annually or when the low battery signal sounds.

7.4 CO can kill quickly without warning. Every year on average around 15 people die from CO poisoning caused by gas appliances and flues that have not been properly installed or maintained or that are poorly ventilated. Levels that do not kill can cause serious harm to health if breathed in over a long period of time. In extreme cases prolonged exposure to CO can cause paralysis and brain damage.

7.5 There are signs you can look out for that indicate incomplete combustion and production of CO:

- yellow or orange rather than blue flames (except fuel effect fires or flueless appliances which display this colour flame)
- soot or yellow/brown staining around or on appliances
- pilot lights that frequently blow out
- increased condensation inside windows.

7.6 Early symptoms of CO poisoning can mimic many common ailments and may easily be confused with food poisoning, viral infections, flu or simple tiredness. Symptoms to look out for include:

- headaches or dizziness
- breathlessness
- nausea
- loss of consciousness
- tiredness
- pains in the chest or stomach
- erratic behaviour
- visual problems.

However, while you may notice some of these signs, do remember that CO is undetectable to human senses.

7.7 Actions to take if a CO detector activates or you think you have any of the symptoms described in paragraph 7.5 above:

- switch off the appliance
- if necessary, isolate the gas to the property
- open door and windows to ventilate the room – do not sleep in it
- alert all colleagues in the building; follow your emergency evacuation procedure, and On Call procedure
- if possible, label the appliance as 'out of use' to prevent others using the appliance
- visit your GP or accident and emergency department urgently and tell them you believe your symptoms may be related to CO. They can carry out a simple blood test to check this.

Legislation and external guidance

This policy and related procedures consider the following legal requirements and regulatory codes, standards, and guidance:

- Data Protection Act 2018

- General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR)
- Equality Act 2010

The policy also ensures we abide by the relevant legislation and codes of practice:

- The Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018
- Approved Code of Practice: Safety in the Installation and use of gas systems and appliances
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Care Quality Commission's Fundamental Standard Regulations 2014 – (The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014)
- Health and Social Care Act 2088 – Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance
- Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022

Dimensions related guidance, procedures, forms, or flowcharts

- **HSE Guidance on gas appliances**
- **Monthly carbon monoxide detector check**

Glossary

An explanation of words and terms that appear in this policy or the related procedures.

Term	Definition
Void	When a property is unoccupied for a period of time.

Ownership and approval

Policy owner	Head of Property and Housing Supply
Policy Responsible Executive Lead	Chief Housing and Commercial Officer
Approval level	Quality and Practice Committee (QPC)
People and groups consulted	Group Head of Health and Safety Health and Safety Advisor Housing Compliance Manager Diversity Matters National Colleague Forum Policy Subgroup
Policy review period	Three yearly

Version control

Version number	Approved date	Communication date	Summary of changes
9	**13th March 2025 (FRC)**	**1st April 2025**	Reviewed and updated to latest Group policy standards and language. Change of policy name. Change of policy ownership – now co-owned by Health and safety and Housing Departments. Policy content re-written.
9.1	**10th February 2026**	**24th February 2026**	Updated to latest Group policy standards. Change of approval level committee from FRC to QPC. Section 4 re-written and roles and responsibilities clarified following internal audit. 6.1 updated emergencies.

n/a	**11th August 2026**	**n/a**	Change of Executive Lead from Chief Quality, Governance and Lived Experience Officer to Chief Housing and Communications Officer.