

Osborne

How to achieve 100% Gas Safety Compliance



40 consecutive months of
100% Gas Safety Compliance

Slough Borough Council

Issue

Poorly maintained gas appliances and flues can create significant health and safety risks for residents. That's why social housing landlords implement rigorous regimes to test, repair, certify and replace equipment. But it will be no surprise to most of us in the sector that gaining access continues to be one of the biggest barriers to regulatory compliance.

Slough Borough Council (SBC) faced some of the same difficulties affecting landlords up and down the country. To overcome the issues, they were committed to working smarter as one team with their maintenance service provider Osborne, and with the residents.

As a result, for the last 40 consecutive months SBC have been 100% gas compliant.

Solution

Understanding and recording the status of gas appliances is fundamental to compliance and SBC sanctioned an exercise to age profile gas boilers and

gather condition data in their 6,000 properties. Undertaken over two years, the survey led to investment in an extensive rolling programme of boiler upgrades which is now complete.

Alongside this an annual gas service programme has been implemented which guarantees 100% compliance.

To overcome the challenge of access, there has been a shared commitment which now makes it easier for residents to keep appointments:

- A re-certification notice is triggered two months in advance from the gas boiler tracking system.
- Appointments are sent by post, email, and SMS with a reminder call the day before.
- Residents can easily change dates and times in advance.
- On the day, if residents are out, they are contacted by phone and if they are nearby the service engineer will wait for their return.
- And weekly meetings with the clients' operational and housing team are used to resolve issues, reflect, and undertake lessons learnt exercises.

In a small number of cases where residents simply don't want to allow anybody into their home, the one-team approach is particularly valuable. By involving the client team well before a gas safety certificate is about to expire it's usually possible to negotiate access without having to resort to costly and time-consuming court orders.

Outcome

Active management has led to SBC achieving 100% gas compliance for 40 consecutive months, which keeps residents' gas safe in their homes.

By replacing aged boilers with efficient modern equivalents, the borough has reduced repairs and optimised the range of spare parts stocked. Alongside this, the one-team approach to compliance, using an integrated IT backed solution for tracking, scheduling, and recording data, has overcome many of the access issues.

It's a win for both residents and the council as new efficient well-maintained boilers reduce fuel costs and reduce carbon emissions. These savings are helping to improve lives and deliver a more sustainable borough.