



Gas Access Campaign passes 1 million homes milestone

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A CAMPAIGN to change the law and make it easier for housing providers to protect people in their homes has reached the one million mark.

Social housing providers collectively owning more than one million properties have thrown their weight behind the Gas Access campaign aimed at making it easier to access homes to check gas appliances.

The Gas Access campaign is being spearheaded by Home Group with the Association of Gas Safety Managers and CORGI Technical Services.

The campaign is aimed at tackling a deficiency in the law which prevents housing associations from gaining entry to customers' homes in a timely manner if they are denied access by customers. The full details of the campaign can be found at www.gasaccesscampaign.org.uk

The issue is having an impact across the sector and it is estimated that it will cost social housing providers as much as £0.5bn in the next 10 years unless the law is changed – wasted money which could instead be invested in providing new homes.

Now 61 organisations including Affinity Sutton, Gentoo, L&Q, Halton Housing, Riverside and South Yorkshire Housing Association have joined the call from Home Group, the Association of Gas Safety Managers and CORGI Technical Services for registered providers to be granted the same timely access to homes as local authorities.

Currently local authorities are able to apply to a court to gain lawful entry into homes within 24 hours of refusal by a tenant. Housing associations can take as long as four months to legally gain entry to a property.

Mark Henderson, Home Group chief executive, said: "The law as it stands is putting lives at risk and costing housing providers millions. The Gas Access campaign really seems to have struck a chord with those in the sector. The fact we've hit the one million mark so quickly after launching the campaign shows the appetite out there to tackle this issue.



“Other housing associations clearly share our frustration that as landlords we’re quite rightly legally obliged to ensure the gas safety of our properties on an annual basis yet the law makes it tortuously difficult to gain access when a tenant is being uncooperative.

“Faulty boilers and flues don’t just have the potential to kill those in the household where they are situated. The effects can be devastating to countless neighbours. All it needs is a couple of paragraphs in the Law amending. We trust the new Housing and Planning Minister Brandon Lewis is on board with this campaign.”

Claire Heyes, chief executive of the AGSM said: “This is a major milestone in the Gas Access campaign and we are delighted to have achieved it. This level of support is no surprise, as we have been listening to our members’ frustrations for some time and now they are instrumental in bringing about this much needed change. Gas Managers across the UK are working with their Directors and CEOs to raise awareness and generate support - housing providers are fully aware of the significance of this campaign.

“We won’t stop here though, as the stakes are too high and the consequences of inaction too serious and far reaching. Working together we will continue to keep the pressure on the Minister, MPs and the government to implement the changes that the sector desperately needs.”

To sign up to the campaign and put your name to a petition calling on the Government to alter the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998 visit: www.gasaccesscampaign.org.uk

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For further information contact Robert Weatherall on 0191 290 7908 or email robert.weatherall@homegroup.org.uk

About Home Group Limited:

- Home Group is one of the UK’s largest providers of high quality housing and supported housing services and products.
- Home Group is a social enterprise and a charity (Charitable Community Benefit Society No. 22981R) with a turnover of £327m.
- Our mission is *“to help our customers and clients to open doors to new opportunities and healthy lives.”*
- We provide general needs housing and supported housing services targeted towards helping some of society’s most vulnerable people take control of their own lives. We:
 - house more than 120,000 people a year in 55,000 homes across 200 local authority areas in England, Scotland and Wales.



- work with almost 30,000 vulnerable people through 500+ supported housing, justice and health services each year.
- Care and Support services focus on housing related support, criminal justice and health services.

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CORGI Technical Services Ltd

CORGI Technical Services Ltd has over forty years of technical expertise in all aspects of gas safety. With comprehensive site audits, training for employees, a family of VRQ gas safety qualifications for management, gas auditors, front line housing staff and tenants, legal advice and expert witness testimony, CORGI Technical works with local authorities, housing associations, private landlords, contractors, energy suppliers and the travel industry to support them with their gas safety obligations, compliance and continued improvement. www.corgitechnical.com

The Association of Gas Safety Managers

The Association of Gas Safety Managers (AGSM) is for managers in Social Housing and Facilities Management organisations who are responsible for all aspects of gas safety. The Association was been set up by CORGI in response to a demand from gas managers for a professional Association which can address industry issues with key stakeholders and create one voice from the sector to key government departments. It also provides members with support, networking opportunities, training and many other benefits. All members are undertaking or have completed CORGI's Level 4 VRQs in Gas Safety Management or have an equivalent level of qualification or experience and collectively look after the gas safety management of nearly two million homes across the country. www.agsm.uk.com