

Providing Quality, Affordable, Sustainable Homes



Heating Safety & Energy Policy

DRAFT

If you need this policy in another format, for example larger print, audio format, Braille, Dyslexia friendly or in another language, please contact us.

1. Purpose of Policy

Argyll Community Housing Association Ltd (ACHA) is a Registered Social Landlord managing over 5,000 homes across Argyll and Bute. ACHA has a duty of care to ensure that tenants, staff, contractors and the public are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from heating systems installed in its properties.

This Heating Safety and Energy Policy brings together and replaces the former: - Heating Policy (PS_04) - Solid Fuel Safety Policy (PS_23) - Oil Safety Policy (PS_24)

The policy establishes a single, coherent framework covering: - Heating choice and energy efficiency - Gas, electric, oil and solid fuel safety - Compliance with statutory duties - Carbon reduction and fuel poverty objectives

The overarching aim is to provide safe, efficient, affordable and sustainable heating systems, while supporting ACHA's obligations under EESSH2, the Scottish Social Housing Charter, and climate change legislation.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all domestic and non-domestic properties owned or managed by ACHA, including general needs housing, sheltered housing, offices and other managed premises.

It covers: - Gas central heating systems - Electrical heating systems - Oil-fired space heating and hot water systems - Solid fuel appliances (including open fires) - Renewable and low-carbon heating technologies

3. Key Legislation

This policy supports compliance with, but is not limited to: - Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH2) - Heat in Buildings Strategy - Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 - Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 - Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 - Relevant British Standards and industry guidance (HETAS, OFTEC, SAP)

4. Policy Statement

4.1 Principles

The choice of heating system is a key component in achieving required energy efficiency standards. Heating upgrades will: - Support compliance with EESSH2 - Be technically feasible and cost effective - Reduce fuel poverty - Support decarbonisation objectives

Tenants will be provided with clear information on heating options and the reasons for choices offered.

4.2 Heating Options

Subject to property assessment and fuel availability, heating systems may include: - Gas central heating - Electrical storage or panel heating - Solid fuel central heating - Air source heat pumps and other renewable technologies.

The following principles apply: - Where mains gas is available, gas central heating will normally be offered. - Solid fuel and oil systems will only be upgraded where they already exist and can meet energy efficiency standards cost-effectively. Air source heat pumps and renewable technologies will be considered for harder-to-treat properties. Dual-fuel systems will not be supported.

Where an open solid fuel fire or gas focal fire is retained at a tenant's request, the tenant will be responsible for non-statutory upgrade costs. ACHA will continue to service appliances to meet safety obligations.

An appeals process exists where tenants wish to challenge the heating system offered.

4.3 Energy Efficiency Upgrades

Heating upgrades will be supported by appropriate fabric and insulation measures, including: - Loft insulation upgrades to current standards - Cavity wall insulation where suitable - Alternative insulation measures where required.

4.4 Heating System Safety

4.4.1 Gas and Electrical Heating

All gas and electrical systems will be maintained and serviced in accordance with statutory requirements, including: - Annual gas safety inspections, Electrical safety inspections and certification.

4.4.2 Oil-Fired Heating Systems

ACHA will: - Maintain all oil-fired heating and hot water systems in safe working order - Arrange annual servicing by competent engineers (OFTEC-qualified where possible) - Maintain full servicing and safety records - Ensure carbon monoxide detection is in place. Tenants must report faults promptly and allow reasonable access for servicing.

4.4.3 Solid Fuel Appliances

ACHA will: - Carry out six-monthly servicing and flue sweeping of all known solid fuel appliances - Use suitably accredited contractors (HETAS registered) - Maintain a Solid Fuel Safety Management System - Install carbon monoxide detection where required.

4.4.4 Renewable technologies

(e.g. solar PV, solar thermal, heat pumps) may be installed where they contribute cost-effectively to energy performance targets. These will be serviced annual or according to manufacturers instructions.

Unauthorised installation or alteration of solid fuel appliances is prohibited and may result in removal at the tenant's expense.

5 Staff Development

Staff involved in the delivery, procurement and organisation of the heating installations will be suitably qualified and trained.

All ACHA staff will undertake mandatory Customer Care and Diversity training.

We will ensure that all contractors working for us are qualified to carry out all work requested in a safe and appropriate manner.

6 Performance Development

Performance will be monitored through: - Compliance dashboards - Fortnightly Service Delivery meetings - Monthly operational and strategic meetings - Quarterly reporting to Committees and the Board

Key indicators include: - Valid safety certification coverage - Progress toward EESSH2 compliance - Heating system reliability and repeat repairs

7 Policy Owner

The Director of Assets is the owner of this Policy.

8 Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier where required due to legislative, regulatory or strategic change.

8.1 Equality and Accessibility

ACHA is committed to equality and accessibility. Alternative formats of this policy are available on request. Heating solutions will take account of tenants' individual needs.

9 Complaints

We value complaints and endeavour to use information from them to help us improve our services. Complaints can be made if we fail to apply this policy properly or do not meet our organisational standards. Complaints are dealt with in line with our complaint handling procedure, a copy of which is available from our website, via the following link – <https://www.acha.co.uk/services-complaint-suggestion/> or alternative a copy can be made available on request.

Reference – PS 04 [for new policy, this will be added by corporate services]		
Policy Name – Heating Safety & Energy Policy		
Approving body -	Next Review Date	01/01/2029
Date Equality Impact Assessment completed		