



Health, Safety and Compliance Newsletter

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Welcome!

Welcome to Issue 2 of our Health, Safety and Compliance newsletter, just for colleagues operating in the Scottish social housing sector.

We're delighted to bring you snippets of news from the sector and updates (regulatory where they emerge) as well as telling you a bit about our team and our training. If there is anything YOU would like to see in here or if you'd like to be featured, please get in touch!

**Vicki Cutler, Director, Housing H&S Compliance UK.
CFIOSH, MIIRSM, MIFSM, CMgr MCM1**

Coming soon – Member resources

We are excited to be bringing you a new area of the website which will offer a range of valuable information for clients.

This will be accessible by login/password only and these will be issued in the New Year to our Scottish clients within the consortium.

We won the training provider of the year award!

On a November night in North London, at the Women in Fire Safety awards, Vicki was truly humbled, but absolutely delighted to be announced as the winner of their Training Provider of the Year 2021 award. An absolutely fantastic achievement for ALL of the associates and trainers who support Housing H&S Compliance UK Ltd. Sadly, Vicki wasn't able to attend the event in person, as she was delivering a H&S Training session to a Housing Association board up here in Scotland; but the award was gratefully accepted on her behalf.

We've got lots more 'new' training courses scheduled for development in 2022, so 'watch this space' – if you'd like to see the full range of training available, all tailored specifically for the social housing sector, then pop over to our website here: <https://www.housingcompliance.co.uk/training/>



COVID-19 update for employers

We round off the year in the grip of a new COVID variant which reminds us all that it is still out there and we all, collectively, must 'do our bit'; that includes looking after colleagues whilst they are at work. The HSE have a [webpage](#) specifically on this subject, which is updated regularly, so keep an eye on their specific advice and guidance. The Scottish Government has also published [new guidance](#) for businesses and workplaces on reducing the risk of COVID-19 and supporting staff and customers.

Gas safety

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has written to all social landlords to highlight advice from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on gas safety. Following a recent review, both organisations are keen to highlight the importance for social landlords of an effective management system for gas safety, and in particular, the critical role of the appropriate handling of initial reports of potential problems with gas appliances or flues.

In the letter, Ian Brennan, director of regulation, writes: “*Social landlords have a duty under Section 3 of Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure that they act in a way which does not put tenants or others at risk. They must ensure that they meet all of their duties on tenant and resident safety; obtain appropriate assurance about their compliance with all relevant safety requirements and ensure that they take prompt action to address any non-compliance.*

“This note provides advice on the actions social landlords are expected to take, with regard to gas safety management systems, in order to ensure the safety of their tenants and residents.”

Regulation 36 of The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR) requires landlords to ensure gas appliances and flues in their tenants’ homes are safe to use. [Read more here.](#)

Key performance indicators (KPIs)

Vicki was delighted to be invited by one of our clients, to a health and safety KPI workshop which looked at the purpose of KPIs, whether there are different reasons for reporting and what should actually be reported to make the data appropriate for different audiences. There was a great discussion and debate about establishing meaningful indicators and everyone went away with some ideas and actions to research.

Vicki has been working on a generic set of KPIs which may be useful for organisations as a starting point to map their own indicators; these will be added to the members area of the website. Once established, organisations may wish to consider benchmarking amongst the group.



Fire safety in specialised housing

A [research report](#) into the impact and effectiveness of the Scottish Government’s [Practical Fire Safety Guidance for Specialised Housing and Similar Premises](#) (published Jan 2020), along with the government’s response and proposed actions, is now available on the Scottish Governments’ website. You can view the responses [here](#).

Dangers of emergency tree work

Fallen trees and branches have caused a lot of disruption, but it’s important to remember that emergency tree work is dangerous and should only be undertaken by experienced professionals.

Extreme weather conditions have caused problems across the country in the last few weeks, with many communities still living with the aftereffects of Storm Arwen and Storm Barra. In the past 12 months eight people have been killed by falling branches or trees.

Emergency tree work is complex with many risks, including the tree moving unexpectedly, or the need to carry out work in difficult conditions. The planning and activity itself must be undertaken by a competent person with the necessary training in [emergency tree works](#) such as assisted felling, windblown and part blown trees and emergency planning. For more information and guidance on carrying out tree work safely please [visit the HSE website](#).

And finally... thank you!

Thank you to all of our clients who have supported us over the last 12 months (and more) and who we look forward to working with next year too.

The office will close on 23rd December and re-open on 4th January 2022, although Vicki can be contacted on her mobile in emergencies – 07974 578103.

