



HEATING SAFETY POLICY

2026 - 2029

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▪ T3 – Minor Operational Risk		
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▪ Amendments/updates		

Homes in Somerset – Heating Safety Policy

1 Introduction

Homes in Somerset (HiS) is committed to ensuring that all heating systems within properties managed on behalf of Somerset Council (SC) are safe, compliant, and fit for purpose.

HiS manages a diverse range of heating systems, including traditional gas and electric systems, renewable technologies such as air source heat pumps and solar PV, and higher risk systems such as solid fuel appliances and oil fired boilers.

This policy sets out HiS' approach to:

- Maintaining safe heating systems across all homes and buildings
- Managing risks associated with combustion, electrical safety, and carbon monoxide
- Meeting legislative and regulatory requirements
- Providing assurance to residents, Board, and Regulator of Social Housing

This policy should be read alongside the Heating Safety Management Plan and supporting procedures.

2 Policy Statement

HiS will:

- Comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements relating to heating safety
- Ensure all heating systems are installed, serviced, inspected, and maintained by competent and accredited contractors
- Manage carbon monoxide risks through installation and maintenance of detectors and safe system operation
- Maintain a Heating Safety Management Plan defining processes, controls, and assurance
- Ensure data relating to heating safety is accurate, auditable, and treated as safety critical
- Provide residents with clear guidance on safe use of heating systems
- Maintain oversight of emerging technologies (e.g. heat pumps, solar systems) to ensure safe operation

3 Legal Requirements

This policy is underpinned by (not exhaustive):

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Building Regulations 2010 (as amended)
- Electrical Safety Standards Regulations 2020
- Safety and Quality Standard, Social Regulation Act 2023
- The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (Awaab's Law)

These place duties on Somerset Council as landlord and HiS as managing agent to ensure heating systems do not present a risk to life.

4 Scope

This policy applies to all premises managed by HiS, including:

- Domestic dwellings and houses
- Communal blocks and district heating systems
- Sheltered and extra care schemes
- Non-domestic premises

It covers all heating types:

- Gas boilers and appliances
- Air source and ground source heat pumps
- Electric heating systems
- Communal and district heating systems
- Oil-fired heating systems
- Solid fuel appliances (e.g. log burners)
- Open fires
- Solar PV systems associated with heating or hot water
- Hybrid systems

5 Heating Safety Management Requirements

HiS considers the following compliance measures are required to meet statutory duties:

Requirement 1 – Servicing and Safety Checks

- All heating systems will be serviced at required frequencies by competent contractors and directly managed trades team
- Gas systems will be subject to annual safety checks
- Specialist systems (e.g. heat pumps, oil systems) will follow manufacturer and industry standards.

Requirement 2 – Carbon Monoxide Safety

- Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors will be installed in all applicable properties (solid fuel, gas, oil, open fire or other carbon burning appliances)
- Detectors will be maintained and replaced in line with manufacturer guidance
- Residents will be provided with appropriate safety information.

Requirement 3 – System Integrity and Installation

- All installations and replacements will comply with relevant standards and regulations
- Only competent and certified contractors will be appointed.

Requirement 4 – Higher Risk Systems

HiS will apply enhanced controls to:

- Solid fuel systems and open fires (including chimney/flue maintenance)
- Oil systems (including tank inspections and environmental risk)
- Communal heating systems (including system-wide risk management).

Requirement 5 – Renewable Technologies

HiS will:

- Ensure safe installation and operation of heat pumps and solar PV
- Maintain appropriate servicing and monitoring regimes
- Provide residents with clear usage guidance.

Requirement 6 - Access and Compliance

HiS will:

- HiS will operate robust processes to gain access for servicing and safety checks
- Non-compliance will be escalated appropriately.

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Responsibilities

The following posts hold responsibility for Heating Safety:

Somerset Council (SC)

- Acts as landlord and oversees compliance through quarterly performance reporting and regular Partnership meetings.
- Overall responsibility for compliance and reporting of any breaches to

the Regulator of Social Housing

HiS Board

- Ensures a Heating Safety Policy and Management Plan are in place and effective.
- Scrutinises performance and compliance.

Chief Executive

- Duty Holder for Heating Safety.
- Responsible for ensuring compliance and reporting any breaches to SC.

Director of Asset Management, Safety & Development

- Supports the Duty Holder and ensures a robust management framework and oversight of Heating Safety performance.
- Leads strategic oversight and assurance

Head of Compliance & Building Safety

- Develops and reviews policy.
- Ensures implementation, staff competence, and contractor oversight.

Compliance & Building Safety Specialist

- Operational Heating Safety lead acting on behalf of the Responsible Person(s).
- Manages operational delivery and compliance monitoring.

All HiS Colleagues

All staff must:

- Support access and positively promote servicing requirements to residents.
- Report potential hazards immediately.
- Support residents with heating safety awareness.

Residents

Residents are responsible for:

- Heating safety within their homes, including regular testing of carbon monoxide detectors.
- Allowing access to undertake servicing, works or other checks.
- Reporting concerns promptly.

7 Quality Assurance & Audit Works

HiS will operate a structured quality assurance regime to ensure that heating servicing, installations, and remedial works are completed to the

required standard and in accordance with regulatory and contractual requirements. HiS will:

- Undertake a programme of post-inspection audits of a defined proportion of heating works, including:
 - Routine servicing
 - Installations and replacements
 - Remedial and repair works
- Ensure that audit activity is risk-based, taking into account:
 - Contractor performance history
 - Type of heating system (e.g. higher risk systems such as gas, solid fuel, oil)
 - Complexity of works (e.g. communal systems, renewable technologies)
 - Vulnerability of residents
- Maintain a minimum sampling regime, with the expectation that:
 - A proportion of completed works will be independently inspected
 - Higher risk or poor-performing areas will be subject to increased sampling
- Ensure that audits assess:
 - Compliance with statutory requirements and relevant standards
 - Quality of installation and workmanship
 - Accuracy and completeness of certification
 - Safe operation of the system
- Record all audit outcomes, including:
 - Pass / fail results
 - Defects and non-compliance
 - Required corrective actions
- Require contractors and directly managed trades team to:
 - Rectify defects within agreed timescales
 - Participate in performance review processes
- Use audit findings to:
 - Inform contract management and performance monitoring
 - Identify systemic issues or training needs
 - Escalate concerns through governance arrangements

Persistent or significant failures will be escalated in accordance with HiS contract management and compliance frameworks.

8 Equality & Diversity

HiS is committed to delivering Heating Safety services in a way that is fair, inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of all residents, colleagues, and stakeholders. In line with our organisational Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) commitments, HiS will:

- Identify and support vulnerable residents by proactively considering medical, social, cultural, and disability-related needs when planning access, communication, and Heating Safety interventions.
- Make reasonable adjustments to ensure no individual is disadvantaged when receiving Heating Safety services. This may include extended appointments, alternative communication methods, assisted visits, or coordination with carers/advocates.
- Communicate in accessible formats, offering information in large print, Easy Read, audio, Braille, and translated materials on request. Digital formats will also meet recognised accessibility standards.
- Respect cultural and religious needs, ensuring colleagues and contractors act sensitively and maintain professional standards when working in residents' homes.
- Train colleagues and contractors to recognise equality needs, unconscious bias, safeguarding cues, and the importance of inclusive customer service within Heating Safety roles.
- Monitor equality impacts, using data and feedback to identify trends, remove barriers, and improve service delivery for groups with protected characteristics.
- Work collaboratively with partners, including social care, health professionals and advocacy organisations, where additional support is needed to keep residents safe.

HiS will ensure that equality considerations are embedded throughout all Heating Safety processes - from resident engagement and access management to Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) actions, remedial works, and emergency planning.

Performance

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will include:

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- Number and % of properties with valid safety checks against the Total Landlord Requirement
- Number and % of CO detectors installed against Total Landlord

Requirement

- Number and % of CO detectors with an in date service against Total Landlord Requirement
- Number of heating-related safety incidents

Performance will be reviewed monthly by the Board, Executive Team, and Somerset Council.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

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- Formally every three years.
- Following legislative changes, incidents, audits, or other significant triggers.

The Chief Executive, with the Executive Team, Senior Leadership Team, and Health & Safety Forum, will recommend the policy for Board approval.

Related Policies and Documents

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- Heating Safety Management Plan (2026 - 2029)
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy (2025–2028)
- Health and Safety Policy (2026–2027)
- Contractor Management Policy (2024-2027)