

ARE YOU GAS COMPLIANT?

We have recently worked with a number of housing associations that have been concerned about their gas compliance performance.

Our work with these organisations has been varied. Some of the ones that have approached us are performing well, but find maintaining compliance is at an extraordinary cost. Others do not completely trust the numbers they report, so cannot be certain of their performance, and some we've worked with have had a failure which has led to them having to re-evaluate their whole compliance philosophy. Read their stories below:



NO - AND WE DIDN'T REALISE WE WEREN'T...

Ad Esse were asked to work with a large London-based Housing Association as a result of a number of gas compliance issues coming to light following an internal audit. Issues included errors on certificates, certificates not being locatable for many tests, and the planning and following through of visits and no-access appointments being deemed not rigorous enough.

Ad Esse conducted a rapid diagnostic, including visiting each operating site, auditing compliance and completed an end-to-end value stream map for the whole gas servicing process. This included all contractors and looked at all elements of servicing and compliance. Many specific issues were identified, and agreement was reached on the scope and purpose of the redesign process. We then ran a series of redesign workshops, looking at how to guarantee 100% compliance within deadlines and how to ensure that every certificate was complete, correct, properly filed and easily retrievable. Following the redesign activity, a project plan was developed with clear, time-bound actions for all those involved. Implementation was completed and the process was then tracked to ensure that all the new process steps were being correctly delivered.

Over the next two months, compliance rose to 100% and errors and incomplete certificates at point of completion fell to below 10%. In the following year, the process was being used as an example of best practice at housing conferences.

NO - AND WE KNOW WE'RE NOT...

Ad Esse worked with a UK-wide Direct Labour Organisation on all repairs and gas servicing processes for over a year. We were asked to help them to become a leader in repairs and gas compliance. At the time NICEC had two benchmark KPI targets. 100% for correctly completed work and 60% correctly completed documentation. The organisation were falling short on correctly completed work, with it varying between 80% and 90%. For correctly completed documentation their performance hovered between 50% to 60%. They set a target of 90% for correct documentation, a significant increase compared to the acceptable standard.

We started by completing diagnostic work to identify the reasons for non-compliance and then proposed a series of process and system improvements. The team designed a new 'hardcoded LGSR' and trained all engineers and supervisors to correctly complete the certificate. An automated compliance checker was introduced to highlight errors and 'flag' non-compliant certificates. Information Centres were set up and the team created a suite of core measures that were reviewed by the teams on a daily and weekly basis.

At the end of the project, the organisation was achieving rates of 95% to 100% for correctly completed work, and 95% to 100% for correct documentation.



YES (MOSTLY) - BUT OUR PROCESS IS VERY INEFFICIENT

Ad Esse worked with a G15 group member and their contractor, to review their end-to-end gas servicing process. This review was part of a wider transformation programme across the organisation. We were briefed with helping them develop a more efficient process for achieving 100% of gas servicing delivery before certificates expire. While the organisation were close to their 100% compliance target, operating at over 99% at the time, it was acknowledged that the process was significantly resource-intensive and inefficient, requiring nearly double the number of visits than the circa 5,000 services required, due to no access visits. There were also issues around information sharing, trust in the data and the cost of an unnecessarily unwieldy process.

Following a diagnostic of the current state to understand the issues and failure of the process, we recommended a number of key changes. These included an improved and more collaborative monitoring of gas servicing through the use of team Information Centres, making it easier to manage by exception. This led to more regular and consistent information-sharing between the contractor and organisation whilst working from a single, shared source of information.

The team were tasked with analysing the effectiveness of all communication with residents, including letters at each stage, texts, emails and also trialling contacting residents from different numbers. To manage exceptions better, the team devised specific processes to deal with residents with care and/or support needs, or vulnerabilities, and pre-selected residents that were known to be difficult. Finally, contractors had a process to get involvement from housing managers sooner in the process where access was causing an issue. Despite the very high level of conformance, the earlier identification of exceptions meant the likelihood of 100% compliance was increased for the process. Additionally, it was expected to deliver a significant reduction in the number of visits required (circa 25-30%).

SUMMARY

If you have concerns about your Gas Compliance then get in touch. You may just be wanting reassurance - in which case our thorough service diagnostic can provide confidence that your processes are delivering on compliance. Alternatively you may be aware of problems and need assistance to resolve them. Our team can help you understand the root causes of any problems and work with your staff to design a service that will deliver effective and efficient gas compliance processes.

Contact us on seriousfun@ad-esse.com to discuss your needs.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to know more about this specific piece of work please contact us. You can also receive regular case studies and articles like this one by subscribing to our newsletter by emailing seriousfun@ad-esse.com

