Celebrating 5 fantastic years!
The AGSM reflects on its successes to date and what the future might hold

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Welcome to the Autumn edition of Ignite!

Firstly, I would like to thank all of you who joined us for our AGSM 5th anniversary celebrations last month. It was wonderful to be able to mark the occasion with so many of our AGSM & AESM members, old and new, and recognise our achievements to date. Here’s to the next 5 years!

Since our last edition of Ignite, there have been some events that have already had, and will continue to have, an impact on our industry. Most notably the horrific Grenfell Tower disaster, which has not only shaken the country, but has also triggered many questions for the social housing sector.

As an Association, we want to ensure we are doing everything we can to support our members at this challenging time. As such, we are not only continuing to campaign for changes in regulation, but also broadening our training focus to include compliance modules such as fire, legionella and asbestos safety – all so relevant in the current climate. We have also reviewed our membership benefits to include greater technical support if you ever need it. We will continue to offer networking opportunities at our technical meetings and annual conference, which we hope you will be able to take advantage of.

I also recently took the opportunity to write to the CEOs of our AGSM members to highlight the important work you are doing, and some of the benefits of your membership for their organisation. The letters were very well-received and I have since been sent some wonderful feedback. I very much hope we have created a greater understanding of the importance of gas safety in your organisations.

I am also pleased to say that we continue to develop the AESM too. We have been working hard over the past few months to strengthen our relationships with ECA, BEAMA and Electrical Safety First, to ensure our voice is heard in the wider electrical safety industry.

As always, we welcome any relevant news or feedback you may have and, in the meantime, I hope you find this edition of Ignite insightful.

Claire Heyes, CEO AGSM & AESM
The Institute of Gas Engineers and Managers (IGEM), Gas Utilisation Committee have issued a draft revision of the UP/17 Standard ‘Shared chimney and flue systems for domestic gas appliances’ for comment by the industry.

The Standard, which was originally published in July 2011, summarises best practice in the use and maintenance of new and existing “shared flues” systems i.e. shunt duct, Se-duct, U-duct systems, and fabricated shared chimney/flue systems (communal flue systems (CFSS)). The intention is to make designers, installers, maintenance persons and landlords aware of the safety issues surrounding the use of shared flue systems.

IGEM are also considering updates to their Gas Industry Unsafe Situations Procedure (GIUSP), and the IGEM/G/5 - Gas in multi-occupancy buildings, in light of the tragic events at Grenfell Tower. Amendments to these standards and procedures will be announced in the Journal of IGEM once finalised and agreed.

Another Successful year for National Gas Safety Week

Organisations across the UK joined forces during the week of 21st September 2017, to promote Gas Safety. In its 7th year, Gas Safety Week has grown from strength to strength, bringing together housing associations and suppliers to raise awareness of the dangers of unsafe gas appliances, that can cause fires, leaks, explosions and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. With 21 deaths and over 800 gas-related injuries in the last three years, it’s crucial that people have their appliances checked each year by a registered engineer to be assured they are working safely and efficiently.

CORGi and the AGSM worked with housing associations to help promote these important messages, sharing branded literature, articles and press releases to support the campaign. This year, members of the CORGI team also made themselves available to present to gas apprentices, helping them to understand the importance of the work they will be carrying out when qualified.

Claire Heyes, CEO of CORGI and the AGSM, said, “We are delighted to have the opportunity to support this campaign. Gas Safety is at the heart of everything we do at CORGI, and raising awareness with both the general public and gas engineers is something we strongly support.”

Regulation 36 – WE DID IT!

The AGSM are delighted to receive positive news regarding its proposals to adopt an MOT style of servicing for the Landlords’ Gas Safety Record. HSE have confirmed that legislation changes will be made to the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR), which includes Regulation 36, in early April 2018. Despite being a little later than anticipated, the legislation change is being seen as an extremely important step forward for the industry.

Claire Heyes, CEO of the AGSM, said: “I think we can all be proud of this achievement. I would particularly like to thank all of those who campaigned with us to convince the HSE and other stakeholders of the significant benefits to our sector - this really is fantastic news.”

HSE will be proposing the following legislative change:

Regulation 36(3): Introduce flexibility in the timing of landlords’ annual gas safety checks, and clarify which defects should be recorded
Recognition from the top

The AGSM National Conference and Exhibition is always a great opportunity for the Association to hear feedback directly from members about what is really important to them. One of the topics raised this year was the need for a greater understanding at the most senior level, of the important work carried out by our members throughout their organisations.

As a result, in July this year Claire Heyes, CEO of the AGSM, wrote to the chief executives of all members to highlight the continued dedication and important contributions all AGSM members have made to the industry.

The AGSM received some wonderful feedback from both CEOs and members and the letters resulted in many visits, meetings and discussions between members and their senior management team. It is hoped these meetings will not only improve company-wide understanding of gas safety but also have a very positive impact for AGSM members and the industry as a whole.

National Housing Federation Responds to Grenfell Tower Tragedy

The National Housing Federation have hosted their first post-Grenfell expert panel meeting to support members in a range of specialist work areas and to assist with the scope and shape of immediate and longer-term policy and best practice guidance.

Panel members represented a wide range of sector experts, from lawyers and funders to insurers, surveyors, fire engineers and cladding specialists. The panel aims to meet at regular intervals and has committed to work with the NHF in an open but measured way. The first meeting’s discussion covered finance and investment, Government approach and clarity, safety considerations, and sector attitudes to tower blocks following the fire. They are working to map Government timescales and coordinate work plans to ensure members have access to the appropriate levels of expertise.

EDM urges housing associations to support life-saving technology to improve gas safety

Gas Tag’s efforts to use technology to improve gas safety in homes across the UK have been recognised in Parliament. George Howarth MP has tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) praising Gas Tag Ltd and calling on landlords and social housing providers to support the “life-saving initiative”.

The company’s innovation allows engineers to sign-in by touching their mobile against a special tag when they visit a registered property, providing the landlord with geo-tagged, time-stamped and photo-verified evidence of all work carried out. It’s the first up to the moment system to monitor gas safety in homes and means landlords can access up to the moment KPI-driven monitoring to ensure their tenants are safe.
Mark Duffy joins CORGI this month as Technical Safety Manager. We thought there was no better way to introduce him than with a little question and answer session in Ignite magazine. Here’s what he had to say...

Can you tell us a bit about yourself?
Spending time with my partner and four children is very important to me, so I’d describe myself as a real family man. I enjoy playing the guitar in my spare time and when I’m not strumming a tune, you’ll either find me practising my archery skills, playing pool in the Portsmouth Wednesday league, or with my head in a book! I like to keep up to date with technical writings as part of my job, but JRR Tolkien, Martin and CJ Sampson are also firm favourites.

What attracted you to join the CORGI team?
I’ve always associated the name CORGI with professionalism and respected its values. From the start of my career at British Gas to more recent contact with the CORGI team, I have always found the organisation interesting and was therefore very pleased when offered the opportunity to join the team.

Can you talk a little about your background in relation to your new role?
I began my engineering career with British Gas in 1990 and, after leaving them in ’98, I continued on to roles involving quality control, supervision and then management. At some point along the line, my career developed into teaching and training, so I’ve had the opportunity to play a part in the development of the ACS gas training scheme and provide building services training for several awarding bodies and commercial companies. Most recently I have been working in project & compliance management within property services for social housing groups which I’m sure will be very relevant in my new role.

What would you say your greatest achievement to date is?
On a personal level having four children who are good, honest and working hard to do well, has to be one of my greatest achievements. However, on a professional level it is probably overcoming various obstacles to create, design and develop a gas & building services training facility which ended up being praised by the awarding bodies, quality assurers and my employer for its design and application.

What are you looking forward to in your new role?
I’ll be joining CORGI as Technical Safety Manager for the South in mid-September, and I’m really looking forward to getting involved with both the technical and training elements of the role. It is a great sector to work in and I’m keen to get out to meet our members and customers and support them in achieving their goals.

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The events of June this year marked a turning point of focus in the housing sector. Over the past couple of years, we were battling with politicians over the causes of the housing crisis, the voluntary Right to Buy, the 4-year rent reduction and how we could all build new homes…. And mergers on top of that. In fact, up until the tragic events occurred at Grenfell, this article would have covered new deregulation measures and what that might mean for our sector. How things change!

We should remember that the last Government (you know Ant and Dec, or was it Cameron and Osborne?) shared lots of rhetoric about the need to cut red tape and remove or reduce health & safety rules and regulations. You won’t hear any of that now from any politicians - there has been a stark wake up call. Suddenly those building regulation reviews that were delayed, those cuts to emergency services and the stigmatisation of the poor will be viewed as contributing factors to one of the worst disasters of the modern age, something that will be a watershed for the wider industry and the housing sector.

So, what can we expect to see occur as a result of this event? Firstly, a benchmark that will be the subject of learning material in technical courses up and down the country for years to come – remember Ronan Point? We are going to see an expedited review of building regulations, and we can expect huge pressure to introduce new requirements not just on fire safety, but on a range of safety issues. At a basic level, the sprinkler debate will rage on, but let’s hope this does not come with unintended consequences - will sprinklers hinder escape in the event of fire; would they prevent another Grenfell; and do they introduce a risk of legionella?

What we do know is that there will be less talk of using our resources to build more new homes, if we can’t properly maintain those we already have. Health & Safety will be one of the key assessments of how well our organisations are doing, and our sector is expected to find the resources to ensure rigorous compliance. Sector metrics will need to be rethought, so that some form of reassurance can be provided to the regulator and to the wider public that we are doing our jobs properly. If you work for a housing association, expect far tougher questions from your Board. If you don’t, there is something wrong, as the onus on governance will spotlight compliance far more. Those who are due an In-Depth Assessment by the HCA should be ready - there is no doubt that your management of safety and compliance will constitute far more of the weighting in the coming year. If you have not taken any notice of the governance downgrades of the past year and are not on top of compliance, expect a poor result and potentially the need to find a new dance partner (remember the last article about mergers?).

Many in the sector will refocus their internal audit plans to cover compliance, and others will bring in specialist companies to review their policies and processes. There will be a resurgence in the use of compliance experts, which need to be managed to avoid wasting effort and resources. The Government will not stand back idly and wait for the sector to take action. Make no mistake! We’ll be told what needs to be done and expected to get on with it. We will obviously engage as a sector, we will get to contribute to the debate, but the stakes politically are too important to ignore. We have a public enquiry. Undoubtedly, and rightly, much of the attention will be directed at the housing sector, and there is a danger that the contributing political environment will be missed or overlooked. More importantly, make sure that your customers (your tenants and leaseholders) have a voice, are involved and are reassured. If there is one important lesson from Grenfell, it is that you must focus on the people, you must hear what they say, and must act on concerns.

This article was written by the AGSM’s political correspondent Alan Keers, Deputy Chief Executive of Red kite Community Housing.

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The tragedy at Grenfell Tower has rightly concentrated minds in the RSL sector on safety in multi-occupancy buildings. In the first instance, this has been focused on fire safety but there are areas of gas safety that need to be considered as well.

As Grenfell Tower was a fire, most checks are centring around the actual combustion and heat producing elements of gas appliances in high rise blocks. Usually the appliances in multi-occupancy buildings are cookers and boilers.

Cooker safety in high rise buildings is largely as it is for single or two storey houses with clearance zones around appliances, ventilation and not having curtains etc. too close to appliances, being the main considerations. Landlords also need to consider Gas Safe Register TB 015* which references IGEM/G/5* regarding the need for flame supervision of burners on flueless gas appliances in multi-occupancy properties.

Gas boilers, being heat producing appliances in contact with the building fabric, must be installed with due regard to the manufacturer’s instructions and the relevant British Standard documents. The most important area is the installation of the flue, and manufacturers will differ on their requirements. Some state that no clearance is necessary from the outer (air inlet duct) to combustible materials whilst others stipulate the need for a 25mm gap in this area.

Another, sometimes overlooked, area of gas safety for multi-occupancy buildings is gas pipework materials and routes. Within protected shafts only certain materials and jointing methods are permissible to maximise the fire safety and general integrity of gas pipework in common areas.

Where pipework passes through the building fabric, firestopping is of the utmost importance. In the case of fire, this firestopping prevents transfer of smoke and/or fire, so is integral to the compartmentalisation of the building and therefore its ability to provide safe refuges for residents in the event of fire.

In certain circumstances pipework needs to be in ducts in domestic dwellings within multi-occupancy buildings and the requirements regarding ventilation of these ducts becomes paramount to the prevention of the build-up of gas in the event of a leak.

The AGSM will be holding a number of free to attend technical meetings this autumn focused on this very topical subject. We will be discussing the topics in this article in more detail. All those responsible for, or with an interest in, gas safety within high-rise buildings are encouraged to attend.

Please contact enquiries@agsm.uk.com or call 01256 548040 if you would like to attend.

*References:
Gas Safe Register TB015 - Requirement to install appliances with FSD in flats and other multi-occupancy buildings
IGEM/G/5 – Gas in multi-occupancy buildings

This article was written by Trevor Batt, IEng MIGEM MIDHEE, Technical Safety Manager, CORGI Technical Services
Grenfell Tower: Time for action on fire safety

Although fires in high-rise buildings are relatively rare, when they do occur they can often have severe consequences for the building's occupants and owners. The recent tragedy at Grenfell Tower in London, in which at least 80 died with dozens more injured, is a case in point. Devastating incidents such as the Grenfell fire do of course raise wider questions about fire safety in these types of residential buildings.

The Building Regulations

The Building Regulations govern how building owners and managers should oversee a range of work, including the provision of fire and emergency systems (Part B, which came into force in 2002), and the materials used during its maintenance and build.

Over the past 15 years, there has been progress on technical standards, some of which has not as yet reflected in the Building Regulations. Most recently, BS 5839:1, which covers non-domestic buildings, is due out in the near future, while a sister standard aimed at homes (BS 5839:6) is currently being revised.

It's now vital that the experts who have been involved with developing these standards are able to provide guidance and support during the planned review of the Building Regulations, announced following Grenfell.

The Stay Put policy

Another area that's always a focal point for queries about fire safety is the 'Stay Put' policy that some high-rise building owners enforce if fires break out. This policy encourages residents of flats in close proximity to another apartment where a fire started to remain where they are, as the building's design should theoretically contain the fire.

This approach may seem reasonable, but it fails to take into account the impact refurbishment work can have on the building's compartmentation, or whether fire detection and alarm systems in communal areas have been downgraded.

As a result, given that a number of high-rise buildings have undergone significant refurbishment work since they were originally built, the time has arguably come to review the Stay Put policy - or consider removing it altogether.

Specifying the right contractor

Building owners and managers have a legal and ethical responsibility to specify the right contractors to design, install and maintain an appropriate system.

One approach is to specify contractors who have the relevant accreditations - which in the case of fire systems are BAFE SP203-1 and LPS 1014. Another option for clients is to specify membership of a relevant trade association – such as the FSA - in tendering and maintenance arrangements.

In addition, regular safety checks undertaken by qualified professionals can also minimise the risk of fires starting within buildings. Gas safety checks in rented homes are already mandated by law every year, and the ECA believes these similar requirements should be extended to electrical safety checks across the rental sector.

It's now vital that residents in high-rise buildings are given peace of mind from a thorough review of the existing regulations, and a commitment by government to ensure that building installation and maintenance work is undertaken regularly by trained professionals.

This article was written by Steve Martin, Head of the Fire & Security Association (FSA) and the ECA's Head of Technical

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CORGI and the AESM offer free support in response to Grenfell Tower disaster

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster, CORGI Technical Services and the AESM are working together to offer free, confidential support to local and national government organisations, to help avoid similar incidents in the future.

The terrible disaster at Grenfell Tower is something that has touched everyone at CORGI and brought about a desire to work together to prevent anything like this unnecessarily ever happening again.

A significant proportion of all fires in the home are caused by electrical faults which continues to be a big risk area for local authorities and residents alike. Identifying these and other potential electrical hazards in properties will enable authorities to focus their safety activities and take faster action where needed.

CORGI, in partnership with the AESM, are therefore offering local authorities, housing associations and the Government a free review of all digital electrical documentation of high and medium rise flats.

Using their revolutionary Compliance Document Management System (CDMS), CORGI Technical will carry out checks to identify where there is no RCD protection, hardwired smoke detection, circuit resistance and accuracy of completion - instantly - using the CORGI CDMS Software, and provide a full confidential report free of charge.

If you or your organisation are interested in taking up this offer, please contact CORGI Technical Services directly on Tel: 01256 548 040 or email enquiries@corgitechnical.com

Do you have an ‘iron grip’ on gas compliance?
Gas Tag’s ground-breaking technology ensures a cast-iron audit trail

Gas compliance continues to be of great concern to landlords – from no access to downgrades. But these pale in comparison to the ultimate cost paid if something goes wrong.

The tragedy of Grenfell and recent stories of gas explosions are overwhelmingly sad reminders of our responsibilities as landlords to protect tenants from these dangers.

When it comes to governance - the HCA has reminded us that an “iron grip on compliance” is a fundamental responsibility.

But how do you ensure that compliance? A number of councils and housing organisations across the UK are installing Gas Tag’s ground-breaking technology to ensure a cast-iron audit trail.

Gas Tag’s innovation, which recently won the AGSM Dragons’ Den award, allows gas engineers to sign-in by touching their mobile against a special tag when they visit a registered property. This provides the landlord with geo-tagged, time-stamped and photo-verified evidence of all work carried out.

For the first time, these life-saving checks are captured using an app on a smartphone in real time, allowing the work to be monitored in real time - which not only keeps tenants safe, but also provides an audit trail for compliance.

All of the information is uploaded to a central portal where landlords can monitor the data through a cockpit-style dashboard. This allows the landlord access to the previous work history of each property and troubleshoot potential issues with appliances more quickly.

The Gas Tag team are in line to meet their target of fitting their innovative technology in 1 million homes across the UK by the end of the year.

Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) in Somerset have recently partnered with Gas Tag. Rich Wiseman, TDBC’s Property Investment Manager, said: “By installing Gas Tag, we’re demonstrating our firm commitment to the safety of our tenants and customers. At the touch of a button, I have an audit trail of gas work that gives me firm assurance on compliance.”

Paul Durose, chief executive for Gas Tag, said: “We’re excited to be working with a number of forward-thinking companies across the UK that clearly put tenant safety at the heart of what they do.

Our technology is an industry first and gives organisations real-time data to monitor lifesaving gas safety checks.”

For further information on how Gas Tag can help your organisation, please visit www.gastag.co.uk or ring 0330 229 0277
Your Housing Group see unexpected benefits with CDMS

Lee Woods is Head of Compliance for Your Housing Group, a large housing organisation based in the North West with around 24,000 units. The Group has a diverse domestic and commercial gas portfolio based across Cheshire and, as one of the pioneers of the CORGI Compliance Document Management System (CDMS), Lee explains what impact it has had since its installation in January 2017.

Around a year ago, we started a journey to review the end-to-end process of how the Compliance Team handle and manage the LGSRs it receives daily from our Heating Suppliers. We understood that to be fit for the future, we needed to evolve, work smarter and, in an ever-challenging market, become more efficient in what we do! We talked to a lot of document management organisations, none of them seemed to offer the total package we were looking for... And then CORGI came to the table with CDMS and we haven’t looked back.

We didn’t just want a system that could receive and save a document, those types of systems are readily available... It had to replace our manual handling of LGSRs as well as provide smart, forensic, logical interrogation of an LGSR, and have the ability to report on these findings. These features were the pivotal decider on YHG integrating CDMS into our working practices.

Like most new systems, we of course decided to run a small ‘trial’ first to better understand how it worked, its functionality and its usability. Understanding it has a user dashboard that utilises a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) system for categorising the documents it receives, we worked with CORGI to set these differentials to our specific needs, allowing us to concentrate our efforts on anything classified as amber and red. CORGI worked closely with the team to set up the RAG guidelines and upload around 2,000 LGSRs during the test – CDMS can read around 2,000 documents in just a few minutes so the output was fast!

Once complete we could easily identify any discrepancies requiring attention - to have this so readily available and at such a fast completion rate was astounding, and a real game changer for Your Housing Group. Following the successful trial and a few tweaks to the RAG guidelines with CORGI, YHG implemented the system in January 2017.

To be honest, since implementation I often wonder how we managed without CDMS. We used to have four full time members of staff manually visually checking LGSRs as they came into the business, leaving us open to human error, as with any human interaction. CDMS has provided great assurance that every document received has the same logical, forensic check, and we’ve been able to redirect team resources to other important tasks.

Working with our own ICT team we now have a better understanding about how to manage the outputs from CDMS to underpin the full end-to-end process of receiving and processing LGSR data. We can now extract, report and upload data in bulk, saving countless hours of administration and laborious unproductive repetitive tasks. Each member of the Gas Team has a login for CDMS, allowing them to use the system to support contract management as well as the management of issuing work following the CDMS checks.

We also discovered two unexpected benefits. The first was that CDMS gave us the ability to target quality audits in such a way that they are now meaningful. Gone are the days of a blanket 10% quality audit on LGSRs. Now we can work with our auditors to target specific heating suppliers/operatives as we can clearly see the critical areas in which they are failing.

Secondly, CDMS can be used for more than just LGSRs. We are due to test more varied documents such as Fire Risk Assessments, Electrical Periodic Inspection Certificates and other documents requiring validation, which will hopefully free up capacity over the whole of the Compliance Team.

If I can pass on any advice to other managers it would be this: look at your current processes, be self-critical and do not rest on that age-old stance of “we have always done it this way.” CDMS has proven that the process of manually checking LGSRs is no longer efficient, effective or reliable to provide you with total assurance that you have checked, scrutinised and actioned as necessary each and every LGSR you have received.
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The new Potterton Assure is fast to fit, reliable and easy to maintain. You asked us to help you speed up installation and maintenance, protect your vulnerable tenants and find an innovative way to support annual servicing. Together, we've made all that happen - and more.

The boiler designed by you.

To find out more about the Potterton Assure www.potterton.co.uk

Totally dependable.
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British boiler manufacturer Potterton has launched a new range of boilers that have been designed specifically for the needs of social housing tenants.

Based on feedback from over 50 local authorities, housing associations and contractors, the Assure range of combi, system and heat only boilers boast unique features that have been created to address the needs of social housing professionals and tenants.

For example, the Assure has an optional safety assist facility. Social housing providers asked for this accessory for those circumstances where gaining access to carry out mandatory service safety checks proves difficult. If installed, this module reduces the boiler’s performance after 11 months, thereby encouraging tenants to contact their landlord, who can then carry out the service safety checks and return the boiler to full power.

To make installation quicker, the Assure range has an optional pre-plumbing jig, and full pre-bent pipes behind kit, so that piping and system pressure testing can be carried out without the boiler in place.

Further innovative features include an external gas test point for ease of access, and a dedicated boiler drain so the boiler can be emptied for maintenance without draining the entire system.

In addition, the Assure range is easy to install and has a light lift weight of 29kg for the combi and system, and a class leading 19.5kg for the heat only. It can fit into a standard 290mm deep kitchen cupboard so can slot into the same space as the boiler being replaced. Its quiet operation means it can be sited in living spaces such as bedrooms and kitchens, without causing disruption for tenants.

With an output range of 12kW to 30kW, there’s a model to suit most property sizes and hot water requirements.

Bill Jones, sales director at Potterton, said: “By involving over 50 housing associations, with a combined portfolio of over 250,000 properties, in the design process, we’ve been able to create a range of boilers that answers the needs of the social housing market.

“Our customers asked us to help speed up installation and maintenance, protect vulnerable tenants and find a way to support annual servicing. Well, specifiers can rest assured that this range ticks every box. Here at Potterton we’ve built our reputation on dependability and our new Assure range is the latest innovation from a team that truly understands the needs of the social housing market.”

Potterton saw the development of a new production line for the Assure boiler as an opportunity to streamline its manufacturing processes. By focusing on quality, health & safety and productivity several improvements have been made.

With Potterton Assure, social housing providers can rest assured that they have a complete heating and hot water solution that meets their needs, backed up by award-winning customer support.

To find out more information, please visit http://potterton.co.uk/products/register-interest-potterton-assure.htm
On the 25th-26th April 2018, the AGSM National Conference and Exhibition will return to Hinkley Island to deliver, what is anticipated to be, the most comprehensive and dynamic event to date. The conference will play host to a variety of interesting and inspiring expert speakers, giving delegates the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the industry’s hot topics and take part in thought leading discussions.

The conference will cover topics including:

- Gas Compliance – The latest updates and industry best practice
- Electrical Compliance – Regulation changes and their impact
- Fire Safety – the latest information
- Legionella & Asbestos Risk Reduction – expert advice
- New technology updates
- Access – what next?
- AESM Live – focused electrical sessions
- Women in Gas dedicated session
- Networking – invaluable dedicated sessions to discuss issues

New for 2018, gas and electrical exhibitors will be joined by key suppliers from the fire, asbestos and water safety sectors, bringing new ideas and innovations for those involved in safety and compliance.

Also not to be missed:
- Networking golf event – 24th April
- AGSM Gas Safety Awards – 25th April

97% of previous delegates rated the conference as ‘really invaluable’ – can you afford to miss out on important industry thinking and regulatory updates?

Earlybird tickets are now available for the conference and exhibition, and AGSM & AESM members receive a substantial discount on standard ticket prices. Special offer prices end in November 2017, so make sure you book your place early to take full advantage! If you aren’t a member but wish to join, there is also a special membership and conference package available.

To find out more or to book, visit www.gassafetyconference.co.uk, email enquiries@agsm.uk.com or call 01256 548 040
2018 marks the 5th anniversary of the AGSM National Gas Safety Awards, and this year’s event will be a night to remember for our guests and nominees. We want to celebrate everything that is great about our sector, and we are looking for your help to find those who deserve an award.

Do you know someone who goes the extra mile? Perhaps you work for an organisation that has put in place an exciting initiative, or have worked with an exceptional supplier... well here is your chance to see them recognised for their efforts!

Nominations are now open for the following categories:

- Gas Safety Leadership Board Participation Award
- Gas Safety Staff Training & Development Award
- Gas Safety Initiative of the Year
- Gas Safety Supplier Support Award
- Electrical Safety Supplier Support Award
- Gas Repairs & Maintenance Scheme of the Year
- Women in Gas Award
- Electrical Safety Collaboration
- Social Housing Compliance Initiative
- Gas Safety Collaboration
- Electrical Safety Collaboration

To submit a nomination, simply visit www.gassafetyconference.co.uk, or email enquiries@agsm.uk.com to request a nomination form.

You can submit nominations for more than one category/person and self-nominations are also permitted.

The closing date for nominations is Wednesday 31st January 2018, 5pm
Take control
Save energy
Cut costs

Our range of heating control products offer the best solution for domestic and social housing applications, they are easy to use, simple to install and are packed with essential features like Landlord Service, Interval Reminder and Legionella Boost Facility making them perfect if you have “Duty of Care” in mind.

For more information about our complete range of products call 01280 816 868 or visit www.esicontrols.co.uk
It’s time to look more closely at controls

At a time when getting even more energy efficiency out of a heating system is proving more and more difficult, leading heating controls manufacturer ESI says there is one place to look ever more closely for savings. ESI says heating controls are one of the few areas worth spending a bit of time on, looking for a little bit more in the way of energy and cost savings.

The decision as to which controls to include in a new build heating installation or in a heating system replacement project is not straightforward, with a wealth of options available and a range of combinations of components that can enable the homeowner to be in control of the heating in their home. ESI has introduced a new 1,2,3 Channel programmer to its range and offers its S and Y Plan kits of controls as highly cost effective ways of meeting Part L Regs in heating system installations. In addition ESI offers its still unique ESCTDEB electronic dual cylinder thermostat - a revolutionary new energy saving product, developed exclusively by ESI Controls and designed for greater accuracy, more effective operation and real homeowner safety benefits.

The greatest energy and safety benefit of the ESCTDEB is the weekly one hour automatic ‘boost’ to over 61°C, disinfecting the cylinder, killing any Legionnaires’ disease, allowing a lower storage water temperature and satisfying a number of legal and building requirements.

The selection of programmers and timers available today are many and varied and range from the simple to the far more complex. You should choose the controls you install based on the homeowners who will need to use them. In a recent survey of housing association direct labour organisations, the majority of call outs to heating system failures were as a result of the often elderly tenant being unable to master the controls – there was usually nothing wrong with the heating system itself!

Having access to the latest wifi controlled, touch screen controls, whilst to many, a huge plus if they are internet savvy, is perhaps to older people or vulnerable individuals who need simplicity in their controls, a step too far!

Clever use of controls can help minimise energy consumption by ensuring each room is at the right temperature for comfort, while avoiding overheating but its important the controls are understood and easy to use for the individuals living in that home. Ensuring they are confident and at ease with how to use the controls will keep your customer’s home cosy and cut their energy bills which is, at the end of the day, what they want from you.

ESI is typical in that it offers a range of programmers from a simple 1 Channel version to a 3 channel Multi-Purpose Programmer which enables the installer to comply with Part L of the Building Regulations by providing separate timed heating control for living and sleeping zones in a home, whilst also providing timed control of hot water. However, the ESI range all offer 24 Hour / 5/2 day and 7 day programming options for each channel. And these programmers also feature a “Landlord” option to encourage social housing and private tenants to allow access for annual maintenance, often a real challenge for landlords.

“We’re providing installers and specifiers with a new range of quality heating controls that are already being met warmly by a number of new build and social housing providers,” says ESI’s UK Sales Director Tristan James. Take a closer look at ESI’s offering at www.esicontrols.co.uk.
Congratulations to our latest graduates!

We would like to congratulate the following people who have successfully completed their studies and achieved a CORGI professional qualification:

**CORGI Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Gas Safety Management in Social Housing**
- Colin Bradnock, Cannock Chase
- Nnamdieze Nwakanma, Accent Group
- Nicholas Thomas, Birmingham City Council
- Bal Chattha, Gravesham Borough Council
- Paul Benton, Boston Mayflower Ltd

**CORGI Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Gas Safety Management in Facilities Management**
- Paul Gaines, Durham County Council
- Alasdair Cameron, Durham County Council

**CORGI Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Electrical Safety Management for Social Housing**
- Adrian Sullivan, Mansfield District Housing
- Benjamin Milligan, Cairn Housing Association

**CORGI Level 3 VRQ Certificate in Gas Auditing Processes**
- Daron Bull, Bromford
- Thomas Donnelly, Stoke on Trent City Council
- Trevor Wood, Nottingham Community Homes
- Duncan Mosses, Aster Property

We would also like to congratulate team members from the following organisations who have recently achieved a level 2 VRQ qualification in either Gas Safety or Electrical Safety in Social Housing:

**CORGI Level 2 VRQ in Gas Safety Awareness in Social Housing**
- Black Country Housing
- Bromford Living
- Cando Contractors
- Charnwood Borough Council
- CHP
- Clanmil
- Derwentside Homes
- ENGIE (Keepmoat)
- Green Oak Housing
- Greensquare
- Grwp Cynefin
- Guinness Partnership
- Islington Borough Council
- Luton Borough Council
- Melin Housing
- Moat Housing Association
- North Herts Homes
- Salvation Army Housing Association
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- St Matthew’s Housing Association
- Stetherson Court
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Stoll
- Sure Group
- Westward Housing
- Wheatley Group

**CORGI Level 2 VRQ in Electrical Safety Awareness in Social Housing**
- Alpha Housing (NI) Ltd
- Black Country Housing Group
- CHP
- Ipswich Borough Council
- Link Group
- M&Y Maintenance and Construction
- NB Housing
- Queens Cross Housing Association
- Regenda

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Gas Tag is the ultimate tool in gas safety compliance. Managing your gas compliance has never been easier.

Find out more at [www.gastag.co.uk](http://www.gastag.co.uk)
Over CORGI’s 40-year history, we have become the UK’s leading technical experts in gas and electrical safety training. We offer fully accredited and regulated courses for both junior and senior team members, to equip them with the skills and knowledge to succeed in their field of expertise.

As Head of Training and Membership at CORGI, part of my role is to ensure that our courses remain relevant. In more recent times, we have seen a shift in training needs, as many organisations move to a more compliance-led framework. Many staff members are now becoming responsible for technical elements outside of their previous remit, and it is for this reason that we have developed a brand-new Level 4 Diploma in Asset & Building Management Compliance. This unique qualification encompasses not only gas and electrical safety, but also legionella, asbestos and fire safety – so relevant to many housing associations, particularly in light of recent events.

However, we also understand every organisation is different, and that is why we are also starting to offer bespoke courses for 2018 too – our training modules can be built around the needs of your team, and we can arrange to deliver this at your own premises or offsite as required.

You’ll find some useful information about our courses in this handy pull-out supplement, however if you’d like further information on our training and qualifications, visit www.corgitechnical.com or contact us on enquiries@corgitechnical.com.

Kim Morris, Eng Tech LCGI MCIPHE RP
Head of Training and Membership - CORGI Technical Services Ltd

Gas Safety Qualifications

Our Gas Safety qualifications are designed for management, frontline staff, new starters and administrators who are involved with, or responsible for, gas safety within their organisation. Each course is specifically tailored to offer just the right level of information needed, and every course is delivered in an informative and engaging manner by one of our qualified technical experts.

- **CORGI Level 1 VRQ Award in Gas Safety Awareness for Staff**
  Half-day course, providing new starters or tenants with a basic induction into gas safety awareness

- **CORGI Level 2 VRQ Award in Gas Safety Awareness in Social Housing**
  Designed for staff in support roles, such as Housing Officers, Social Workers, Surveyors, Maintenance Operatives and Frontline Staff, delivered over 1 day, with a short assessment to achieve the EAL regulated qualification

- **CORGI Level 3 VRQ Certificate in Gas Auditing Processes**
  The ideal course for those responsible for gas audit work, this is a one-day guided learning event followed by supported self-study to achieve the EAL accredited qualification

- **CORGI Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Gas Safety Management in Social Housing**
  A comprehensive course for professional managers responsible for gas safety management, delivered as a one-day guided learning event followed by supported self-study to achieve the EAL regulated VRQ qualification

- **CORGI Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Gas Safety Management in Facilities Management**
  Developed for professionals responsible for gas safety management within Facilities and Estate Management, delivered as a one-day guided learning event followed by supported self-study to achieve the EAL regulated VRQ qualification

- **Level 4 Diploma in Asset and Building Management Compliance**
  Specially tailored course for professionals responsible for compliance management, covering gas, electric, fire, legionella and asbestos training, as a one-day guided learning event followed by supported self-study to achieve the EAL accredited Diploma qualification

To find out more or make a booking, visit www.corgitechnical.com, email enquiries@corgitechnical.com or call 01256 548 040
New Level 4 VRQ Diploma in Asset and Building Management Compliance

With our new Level 4 Diploma in Asset and Building Management Compliance now launched, and places filling up fast for this year, we were keen to speak to our first intake of students to find out why this course is proving such a hit. One of the first to sign up, Graham Smith-Coles, tells us why he chose to study it.

"I recently completed the Level 4 VRQ Certificate in Electrical Safety Management in Social Housing. At the outset, I was a bit undecided about the value that the course would offer me, given I have had a long career in this field. After doing the first module I realised how much legislation I personally needed refreshing on. As Electrical Safety Managers, we tend to do a lot from memory and if we are not challenged there is often no reason to see if any changes have been made or whether our initial interpretation is correct.

Admittedly some of the technical questions may seem fairly simple if you are electrically trained, but with the correct attitude and willingness not to just skip through with minimal effort I’m sure anyone studying this course would find quite a few things useful in their day to day job. One example for me personally was about the electrical certificates supplied. This is something I review on a daily basis, but there were still a couple of things I had missed or had not known.

Adrian Sullivan, AESM
Electrical Manager
Mansfield District Council

This new qualification is designed to enhance awareness and understanding of asset and building management compliance in social housing, and provide the skills and knowledge to meet current legislation requirements across a variety of disciplines.

This course is designed specifically for those who are responsible for asset compliance across their organisation, or those looking to develop their skills in this area.

The VRQ qualification consists of five units:

- **Gas Safety** – Understand the requirements of the gas safety manager in relation to the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations
- **Electrical Safety** – Understand the requirements of the electrical safety manager within the social housing sector
- **Fire Safety** – Designed for managers and supervisory staff who need to ensure that their organisation meets its responsibilities under fire safety legislation
- **Asbestos Legislation Compliance** – This module is for those with a direct or indirect responsibility for the management of asbestos within buildings including meeting compliance with “The Duty to Manage”
- **Legionella Risk Control** – Understand the day-to-day responsibilities when managing and controlling the risk of legionella

The course consists of a one-day training event and access to online learning materials for self-paced learning. Assessment is via a series of set assignments which can be completed at your own pace.

All training is offered in association with CORGI Technical Services and the AGSM.

To find out more or make a booking, visit www.corgitechnical.com, email enquiries@corgitechnical.com or call 01256 548 040
## Get your skills recognised with an accredited qualification from CORGI

At CORGI, we know just how essential it is to ensure you and your team have the knowledge and expertise needed to carry out the important work you do. Our range of specially-designed and fully accredited courses have been developed from over 40 years of industry experience, and answer the needs of both junior and senior team members. Maximise your potential by choosing from Gas Safety, Electrical Safety, or our latest addition, Asset and Building Management Compliance qualifications.

### Places available for 2018 – Book now to guarantee your place!

**Professional qualifications in Gas, Electrical and Compliance Management**

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To find out more or make a booking, visit [www.corgitechnical.com](http://www.corgitechnical.com), email [enquiries@corgitechnical.com](mailto:enquiries@corgitechnical.com) or call 01256 548 040.
We know that in today’s climate, having the skills to manage a wide variety of safety initiatives is crucial. That’s why we have developed a course that answers the needs of anyone in, or looking to move towards, a compliance management role.

Are you and your team Compliance-ready?

New Level 4 VRQ Diploma in Asset and Building Management Compliance

The course covers essential training on the following:

- Gas Safety
- Electrical Safety
- Fire Safety
- Legionella Risk Control
- Asbestos Legislation Compliance

Studying for this accredited qualification will demonstrate both your commitment and that of your organisation to the importance of compliance management.

Find out more or reserve your place on one of our nationwide training courses:

www.corgitechnical.com/qualifications
enquiries@corgitechnical.com
Tel: 01256 548 040

Brought to you by two leading organisations:
Currently more than a third of the UK’s population is aged 50 or over, totalling 23.6 million people. As the ageing population continues to grow, safety product manufacturers are having to develop solutions specifically designed to protect older residents, particularly those who are still living in their own home. FireAngel explore the latest fire safety technologies being specified by social housing providers to minimise the potential risks many vulnerable individuals may face.

According to the latest research by Age UK, over 3.64 million people throughout the UK aged 65 or over live alone. As the nation’s ageing population continues to increase, so too does the number of residents living independently with dementia, sight or hearing loss.

In order to adequately protect vulnerable individuals against the possible dangers fire and carbon monoxide (CO) present, manufacturers are investing heavily in the latest technologies to provide gas and electrical safety managers with not only the solutions, but also the corresponding support to provide all residents with complete protection.

**Cooker Shut Off**

The regular activation of smoke alarms within a property can indicate that a resident is burning food or leaving food cooking on the hob, which is often an early indicator of dementia.

A cooker shut off system is an effective way of preventing a serious fire incident in the kitchen, where 62 per cent of all domestic household fires originate, without the need for human intervention.

The safety device, also known as a stove guard, has an intelligent heat sensor that monitors rapid increases in temperature on electric hob cooking surfaces. If the temperature reaches a potentially hazardous level, the alarm will sound an alert and, if no action is taken, will automatically send a radio signal to a wired cut-off switch to turn off the electricity supply to the appliance, minimising the risk of a potentially serious fire incident.

**Natural Gas Alarm**

Although additives including stench agents are added to natural gas so that it can be smelt, a concerning proportion of the UK are still unable to identify its presence. Symptoms of dementia, loss of smell as a result of ageing and the inability to be woken by a scent, all inhibit an individual’s ability to successfully identify the presence of natural gas.

To combat this, FireAngel’s alarm features a semi-conductor catalytic sensor that continuously detects combustible gas, whilst the two lithium AA batteries supplied offer a simple and easy method of installation, eliminating the traditional requirement for AC Power.

With an ageing population facing numerous health challenges it is vitally important that social housing providers and their contractors are aware of the fire and CO solutions available to assist the ageing population and provide the appropriate levels of protection where required.

For more information on the FireAngel range of smoke, heat, CO, natural gas and cooker alarms, please call 01452 88 7576 or visit www.fireangel.co.uk

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This alarm will warn tenants of dangerous levels of the highly flammable gas (methane) wherever they are in the property.

The ability to smell reduces with age so tenants over the age of 55 may struggle to notice the smell of this combustible gas in the home without the help of an alarm.

Installing a gas alarm will provide an extra level of protection for these vulnerable tenants who may have the potential to cause a leak themselves.

Symptoms of dementia  Loss of smell as a result of ageing  Inability to be woken by a scent

No need for additional wiring or plumbing. Independently tested and certified to BS EN 50194-1:2009

To contact your local Area Specification Manager Call 01452 88 7576 or visit fireangel.co.uk
The AGSM: Celebrating five fantastic years!

It feels like just yesterday that we formed the Association of Gas Safety Managers, and yet this year marks our 5th anniversary. Back in 2012 we set out with the aim to create an association that would not only give our members a chance to network and share best practice, but also represent them at the highest level to bring about positive change in the industry.

In our first year, we had just over 100 members, however this quickly developed, and today we have an impressive membership base of over 300 Gas Safety Managers and Facilities Managers. Not to mention our 26 corporate members, whose participation demonstrates just how seriously they take gas safety within their organisation.

An anniversary celebration is a rare opportunity to look back and take stock of just what the association has achieved over its 5 years. Having put our heads together and thought about it, we were suddenly aware of just how much we have accomplished in such a short space of time – it came as a nice surprise!

Here are just a few of the ways we have been supporting our members:

Campaigning – representing our members as the voice of the industry and campaigning for changes to legislation that really matter, like MOT-style servicing of boilers in rented properties

Connecting – over our 5-year history, we have held an impressive 91 technical meetings, allowing our members to share experiences and develop best practice

Educating – All of our members are studying for or hold a level 4 qualification in gas safety management, and we are continually developing courses to meet the changing needs of the industry, such as the new Level 4 Compliance Diploma

Developing – We hold a conference every year, bringing together leading industry speakers to develop awareness and learning in our industry

Promoting – we produce monthly newsletters and quarterly magazines to share information and promote the activities of our members

Leading – our team are the best in their field and we pride ourselves on providing outstanding advice, learning and guidance in gas safety to all our members

Progressing – we are constantly reviewing and improving our membership benefits and support services to ensure we provide what our members really need

Supporting – we provide best practice documents and guides to support our members in their every-day work

It has been a busy 5 years to date, but we have really loved to see the Association grow and evolve. A huge thank you to all our members for making the AGSM the success it is today. Here’s to another busy but exciting 5 years for the AGSM!
Celebrating in style: The AGSM 5th Anniversary Boat Party is a sail-away success!

Thursday 7th September saw the official 5th year anniversary celebrations of the AGSM. Over 60 people joined the AGSM team to mark this very special occasion, including some of our very first members, and some of our most recent too! Held aboard the Caversham Princess, we set sail from Reading for a scenic cruise along the beautiful Thames riverway…and the sunshine even made an appearance!

The afternoon started with some informative technical sessions, hosted by Paul Soper, Sales Director at Worcester, Bosch Group, where the future of heating was the topic of the day. Tracpipe also gave an informative presentation entitled *Tracpipe: a semi-rigid gas pipe by OmegaFlex Ltd* and CORGi’s Kim Morris talked about the new officially launched the new Level 4 Diploma in Asset and Building Management Compliance. On the upper deck, our special interest group ‘Women in Gas’ heard from two wonderful guest speakers. Jane Nelson of Mears Group, who spoke of her fantastic campaign to encourage more women into the industry; Ray McClay of Worcester, Bosch Group, who gave an inspiring talk about her own experiences as a female in the industry. Both sparked some interesting discussions within the group.

With meetings and presentations completed, members and guests were treated to an onboard barbecue and live music from a fantastic 3-piece jazz band. As we sailed up the river, there was plenty of time for members and guests to network and share their stories about the AGSM.

We’d like to thank all who joined us for our special day of celebrations – with your help, we raised a fantastic £585 for the housing charity Crisis, which will be put to very good use we’re sure. You all made the day a real success and we very much hope you enjoyed the event as much as we did. We’ll look forward to celebrating with you at our next special anniversary celebrations in 2022!

Event kindly sponsored by:

Worcester Bosch Group
Which boiler?

Best Buy

Which?

Gas & Oil Boilers September 2016

All of them.

Every Worcester Greenstar gas and oil boiler has been awarded Which? Best Buy status.
Women in Gas News

Founded at the AGSM National Conference in April this year, the Women in Gas group has gone from strength to strength in the past few months. September 7th saw our first official group event, aboard the Caversham Princess, as part of the AGSM 5th anniversary celebrations. The event was a resounding success, with over 20 women from the industry joining us for a really insightful and interesting event. Our first guest speaker, Jane Nelson of Mears Group, gave us a wonderful insight into her campaign to encourage more women into the industry, which you can read more about in the article that follows. Her presentation was followed by a talk from Ray McClay from Worcester, Bosch Group, who shared her personal experience of progressing a career in the industry. Both presentations sparked some interesting debate within the group, and the open discussions gave members the opportunity to share their own experiences and challenges.

Although just a few months in, we already have plans in place to grow and develop the group to make it a really useful resource for our members. We will be integrating some ideas raised by members at the first meetings, such as having a dedicated Women in Gas reception desk at the AGSM conference, circulation of advanced information to Women in Gas members, and more dedicated forums for the group in the future. In the meantime, to enable members to continue building useful relationships and sharing best practice, we have set up a closed Facebook discussion group, which is for any women from the industry who would like to join – it can be found at www.facebook.com/womeningas. From time to time we will post useful information or news items but members are encouraged to also share anything they feel would be of benefit to the group, as all input is very valued.

Going forward, we would very much like to raise the profile of this group, to encourage other like-minded women within the gas industry to join us. If you would be happy to take part in a short interview to be featured in the next edition of our Ignite! magazine, please do get in touch at enquiries@agsm.uk.com.

Mears Group lead makes a stand for more women in the industry

We were pleased to see that we are not the only ones wanting to support women in our industry. A recent Housing24 article written by Jane Nelson, Executive Director at Mears Group (and guest speaker at our most recent Women in Gas meeting), demonstrated that there is indeed a need to encourage more females into the industry. With as little as 12% of the current workforce female, there is a gender imbalance in our sector. She believes that women possess many of the softer skills that make them well suited to working out in the community, and Mears themselves are putting in place a number of initiatives to encourage more females to work in the sector. From taster days for apprentices to toolkits for schools, their approach is beginning to make an impact...but there is plenty more to be done! You can read the full article on the Housing24 website.

We’ve received our first letter from Everline!

We were very pleased to receive our first letter from Everline earlier this month, the little girl our members helped sponsor at the AGSM Conference. As you can see, she is doing well and very much looking forward to our first letter back to her, which we are writing as we speak. If you have a message for Everline, do get in touch and we’ll make sure we pass it on!
You've probably installed plenty of other boilers in the past, only to find yourself inundated with call backs for cracked heat exchangers.

Well we’ve fitted almost two million of our unique double heat exchangers in our boilers and not a single one has ever cracked!

So, if you install an Intergas boiler, we guarantee the only thing to crack will be the smile on your face!

Find out why installing Intergas will get you smiling.
Call us now on 01527 888000 or visit www.intergasheating.co.uk

Intergas boilers. Tough nuts to crack. Easy to install!
The Perfect Combination

It is not often that our technical experts have the opportunity to research new products for their own purposes, however when CORGI’s very own Technical Safety Manager, Chris Jones, found it was time to upgrade his boiler, he decided to share his learnings.

After nearly 18 years of service it was time to replace the now very tired old boiler. The boiler has provided a reliable source of hot water and heating to my home with a cottage annex over the years without any operational issues. Although certainly stretched to its limits to say the least, with all the family recently left home, we have the house back to ourselves and it was time for an upgrade!

Being in the gas industry for over 35 years and my current position as CORGI Technical Safety Manager, it was still difficult to choose a replacement boiler that was as reliable as its predecessor, especially with the vast supply of efficient products available in the market place today. I have always been very much old school (open vented “system boiler”) and I never thought I would be convinced to go for the “combi boiler” only come with the relevant installation kit, so I bought a set of “full flow” isolation valves separately.

The boiler was easy to install and sits nicely on a wall fixing strip. This allows some tolerance and the ability to slide the boiler horizontally to align with the existing flue hole. The flue elbow slotted into the boiler spigot adaptor and the telescopic flue was adjusted and secured to the correct wall length. The flue assembly was then fitted into place from the outside to ensure the weather shield fitted firmly up against the external brick wall surface. The horizontal wall terminal must be fitted level as the flue already has a 3 degree rise built in.

As the boiler was hidden within a hallway cloak cupboard, any visual pipework was not going to be a real issue. It was also convenient to locate the expansion vessel and associated pipework directly below the boiler for ease of access and future maintenance.

The condensate trap easily slotted onto the condensate drain connector at the base of the boiler, and a 25mm flexible tube then connected to a 32mm waist pipe to be directed through the wall to the outside drain.

There is an optional pipe/valve cover plate available if required for any exposed boiler locations.

After discussion with the tech guys about my specific heating requirements I decided that the Combi Compact Eco RF 36 model would be a good option to consider. Independent hot water options confirmed, decision was made.

Like all Intergas condensing boilers, the Eco RF has a two-in-one heat exchanger which comes with a 10-year warranty. The robust copper and aluminium heat exchanger is unique to Intergas, and its design means that all the components that usually tend to stick, leak or let you down just aren’t there. There’s no diverter valve, no secondary hot water plate heat exchanger, no valve motor and no auto air vent. Tests prove that the heat exchanger has never had a mechanical failure in over 20 years (since its launch in fact), I was informed that not only is it ultra-reliable, but it is very flexible; by simply changing the parameter settings it can be adapted to the home owner’s changing needs. It can be a sealed system, heat only, open vent, open vent combi or multipoint water heater.

This software, when connected to Intergas’s Remote Management system, will “talk” to you, wherever you are as it’s also wireless. There’s a free app which turns your smart phone into a smart thermostat. The RF also provides direct communications via Honeywell wireless controls. Due to my specific requirements Intergas tech guys advised me the EvoHome Connected Heating Controller would be a perfect combination. This would allow control over the hot water storage system for the house, and still provide independent instantaneous hot water for the annex.

When ordering the boiler, you can choose the option of rear Jig fixing with integral expansion vessel, or separate Robo-kit with external 8- or 12-litre expansion vessels. Both come with isolation valves. As my system required a larger expansion vessel, I ordered the boiler only and purchased a 20-litre expansion vessel separately. The boiler location was like for like, so I just needed to order a horizontal offset telescopic wall terminal kit. Upon unpacking the boiler, it was soon apparent the isolation valves

To protect the boiler from damaging effects of black iron oxide, I installed an Adey MagnaClean Professional 2xp for magnetic filtration suitable for larger installations. Again this was located directly below the boiler for ease of future service and filter cleaning. With the gas, hot and cold water connections made, heating system pipework upgraded to accommodate the necessary zone valves, the installation was now complete and filled ready for commissioning. The system then flushed and MC3+ cleaner added.
To install the Evohome Connected Thermostat Pack and Connected Hot Water Kit, I took technical advice from Evohome technical. They provided me with very helpful information and installation guidance to ensure the wireless system would be able to communicate efficiently. Wireless relays were installed for each zoned area including hot water storage, maintaining adequate clearances as recommended to avoid any unnecessary frequency communication issues. Honeywell cylinder stat was fitted and single zone thermostats were located to control the heating areas. The system activators and relevant zone relays paired successfully and allowed heating zone areas to be named on the system controller during the setup process. Once connected, operation was checked and was fully operational. The Honeywell app was downloaded to my smart phone to allow for remote Wi-Fi access and full control of the system.

The necessary gas safety checks were completed during boiler commissioning, including checking the gas inlet pressure, gas rating and flue combustion checks. The boiler at maximum rate was notably remarkably quiet, this being a benefit of the unique vacuum insulation casing. A final drain down and flush, the Magnaclean filter cleans any black iron deposits. The Adey MC1+ protector was added and the system refilled. Upon fully commissioning of the boiler, I found hot water tap delivery excellent at 9 ltr/min at 60 deg (the ECO’s hot water tap efficiency is over 101%). The EvoHome Controller program was finally set up to provide independently controlled heating zones and storage hot water requirements which I found easy to manage from either the Controller or by smart phone!

ECO RF verdict: This is a whisper-quiet boiler which meets independent heating requirements perfectly, and provides maximum savings on heating costs.
Technical Focus:
Gas Pipework Identification Guidelines

In any typical commercial environment, there could well be an array of pipelines in close proximity to each other, carrying an assortment of fluids or gases. It is important therefore that all services are clearly identified for ease of maintenance and determining general if not precise usage.

The 1998 Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulation 23 (1) states: “Any person installing, elsewhere than in any premises or part of premises used only as a dwelling or for living accommodation, a part of any installation pipework which is accessible to inspection shall permanently mark that part in such a manner that it is readily recognisable as part of a pipe for conveying gas.”

In accordance with Regulation 23 (1), there is no requirement to permanently identify gas pipework in domestic premises or living accommodation.

BS:1710 - 2014 specifies two types of colour coding:
- Basic Identification Colours
- Safety Colours

BS:1710 specifies specific colours, identified by their BS:4580 Colour Reference number, that must be used.

Basic and safety colour identification table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pipe Contents</th>
<th>Basic Colour</th>
<th>BS: 4580 Colour Reference</th>
<th>Safety Colour</th>
<th>BS: 4580 Colour Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Gas</td>
<td>Yellow ochre</td>
<td>08 C 35</td>
<td>Primrose</td>
<td>10 E 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPG</td>
<td>Yellow ochre</td>
<td>08 C 35</td>
<td>Primrose</td>
<td>10 E 53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To indicate that the pipework is carrying a fuel gas, the pipe can either be:
- Fully painted with yellow ochre or primrose yellow
- Use adhesive backed pipe marker labels

Where there is a need to identify more precisely the contents of the pipe, then the basic identification colour would be used in conjunction with specified safety colour. Three colour bands shall be placed on the pipework.

The basic colour, indicating the pipe contents, is shown on either side of the safety colour. For example, gases (in either gas or liquid phase - except air) would have a band of yellow ochre, a band of primrose and then another band of yellow ochre.


This article was written by Kim Morris Eng Tech MCIPHE RP, Head of Training and Membership, CORGI Technical Services.

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With 16% of all fatalities at work being electrically related and the average fine for health and safety offences trebling over the last year, it’s more important than ever to be compliant with the Electricity at Work Regulations when working on our near live electrical system. This includes maintenance and installation of gas appliances and equipment connected to the electricity supply.

The equipment and procedures needed to stay safe have been clarified in a recent update to Gas Safe Register Technical Bulletin 118 last year.

The essential test tools and equipment needed are a dedicated voltage indicator, a proving unit to verify the voltage indicator, locking off devices and a clear method of labelling the hazard. With a wide range of voltage detectors and indicators available, it’s important to understand why some equipment, such as multimeters and non-contact volt sticks, should not be used for this process. All equipment should be in accordance with the latest edition of HSE GS38 which includes the most recent standards for test equipment and useful information on how to avoid accidents when working on electrical systems.

Martindale VIPDLOK kits provide the simplest solution for implementing safe isolation practices and include everything needed to prove dead, lock off and stay safe. In addition to complete kits, Martindale also manufactures a range of individual locking off devices for every location, from isolating mcbs in domestic consumer units through to simple mains plug lock outs to prevent appliances being reconnected to the supply while being worked on.

For more information visit: http://bit.ly/martindale-talk
Call for testing of electrical goods in tower blocks

Electrical goods in tower blocks should be tested automatically to help prevent fires, a safety charity has said.

Following the Grenfell Tower disaster in London, which is said to have been started by a faulty Hotpoint fridge-freezer, Electrical Safety First (ESF) said the Welsh Government should test white goods such as fridge-freezers and washing machines for free.

In Wales, registered social landlords own 36 blocks and ESF wants the fire safety advisory group to consider making councils and housing associations have a legal responsibility to carry out free electrical safety checks on appliances and a register of white goods.

AESM Takes a view…

AESM’s Ryan Dempsey shares his thoughts on recent events in the sector and what it means for those responsible for electrical safety management.

Recent events have brought the topic of high-rise electrical risk management to the forefront of our minds and, in times like these, it is important that we focus on the things that matter. It would be easy to try and find quick-fix solutions, however I’m of the firm opinion that we need to go back to basics when working out priorities. For electrical infrastructure, this means ensuring we know where things are, how old they are and their regime of maintenance, if any. The back office also has to be flawless; with specifications, a log of issues and rectification tasks which have taken place.

Here are some things to consider:

Supplier Wiring

• Most high-rise buildings were wired in the ’60s, how are yours wired now? PIRO looped between floors and terminated into a Bemco unit? Are they sealed? What does the earthing look like?

• What do the harmonics look like in terms of the neutral load? Have you increased the size of cables over time as technology and consumer usage has increased? Remember, in the ’60s we only had TVs to consider!

• Where are the connection units for CCTV, TV or controlled entry? Do you have any drying facilities in the block? Is there a facility for communal cleaning and has it been inspected recently?

• Don’t forget to consider enclosed spaces, contact with risers and shuts, escape of water and configuration of ground floor links to flats including access…

Consumer Wiring (in flats)

• What is the age of your system?

• What about RCD protection? Were you a council that didn’t put fridge/freezers on RCDs because of the inrush current or the fear of the socket being used outside?

• Do you have hard-wired smoke detection or heat detectors in kitchens?

• Do you have on-file EICR with recommendations verified by internal technical staff? (Whether you like it or not, the electrical industry is full of people who will say they’re a qualified ‘tester’. Those in the know understand this is not always the case.)

Organisational Process

• Emergency planning – do you have contact numbers and KPIs for processes?

• Have you put in place tenant updates, instruction documents and leaflets that state what to do in certain circumstances?

• Have you considered lifecycle planning?

• Do you have a risk matrix including when work can be carried out in these buildings and by whom?

It is worth remembering that proper planning and management doesn’t necessarily mean an increase in budget. By working smarter, thinking differently and developing a process that suits your organisation, you can make a real difference, without adding cost. And finally, but probably most importantly, whatever you do make sure it is done in conjunction with other departments and external stakeholders. For real success in the current climate, a truly holistic approach is key.

18th Edition: Playing our part

The 18th Edition to the Wiring Regulations (BS7671:2018) is scheduled to be published on 1 July 2018 and likely to come into full effect on 1 January 2019. We are delighted to report that one of our trainers, and member of the AESM, Gary Gundry, is actively helping the IET to consolidate the 1600 public comments submitted during the review period, which closed on 23 August 2017.

Gary’s technical career and knowledge make him ideally placed to assist in the process. Working for two electricity boards at the start of his career, he progressed to a technical role at the NICEIC and later moved to Electrical Safety First. Over the coming months, he’ll attend each sub-committee to record all the decisions on whether a comment is, or is not, accepted. Where accepted, and many are, his task is to ensure whatever is agreed will be accurately represented in the standard when it’s published.

The membership of those committees comprises equipment manufacturer, electrical safety organisations and the Health and Safety Executive to name but a few.

Gary’s vast knowledge of fixed wiring and appliance product safety has enabled him to write, edit and proof several books, and he is now a highly valued member of the CORGI and AESM training team. Gary helps deliver both the Level 4 and Level 2 Electrical Safety Management in Social Housing courses, and other bespoke electrical training as required.
New Energy Label Framework Regulation published in OJEU

The new Energy Labelling Framework Regulation has now been published in the Official Journal by the European Commission and came into force on 1 August 2017. The new regulation provides a new scaling system which will evolve as appliances and equipment technology becomes more energy efficient.

White goods energy labelling will be almost immediately affected, with the requirement to move to the new regulations by 2018. Space heaters, water heaters and biomass boilers will not be affected by the new regulations until 2025.

- **By 2018**
  - EC must adopt Regulations to rescale specific product groups, e.g: washing machines, fridges

- **By 2025**
  - EC reviews labels for space and water heaters, solid fuel boilers

- **By 2026**
  - EC must adopt Regulations to rescale labels for heaters
  - If appropriate the EC may adopt Regulation to rescale labels for heaters

- **By 2030**
  - EC must adopt Regulations to rescale labels for all products except space and water heaters, solid fuel boilers

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- One less pipe to penetrate the building fabric

Combined flue system (CFS)

- Standard flues cannot go as far as a combined flue system and they also take up far too much space in the riser.
- Numerous boiler flues could be routed up the riser to one roof termination point
- “Off the shelf” system that can be easily cut to size on site

The combined PRV condensate can be routed into the CFS and a single drain takes this away at the base of the CFS.

For more information, scan here
Seeing as this year marks the 5th anniversary of the AGSM, we thought it only right to speak to one of our founding members, Darren Fountain, member 001, to find out a little more...

1. If you could swap lives with anyone in history for a day, who would it be?
I’m going for Albert Einstein. He figured out that gravity, space, time and mass and speed were all interrelated and relative. He fled the Nazis; was an avowed critic of racism and a pacifist; he won the Nobel Prize; and in his spare time dated Marilyn Monroe!

2. What would be the one thing you would change about the gas servicing industry?
The AGSM proposal for MOT style LGSR servicing schedule, and their pending adoption in 2018, is great news for social landlords. The other big issue is currently access. It’s a major safety concern for landlords and is somewhat at odds with the law which commits landlords to ensure gas installations are maintained in a safe condition, but simultaneously doesn’t provide an effective legal process for access.

3. What’s one piece of advice you would give your younger self?
Take care of your knees, and enjoy the hair while you’ve still got it.

4. Who would your top two dinner guests be?
For easy company and a good laugh (and hopefully fish and chips, rather than nouveau cuisine), I’m going with Dawn French and Peter Kay.

5. What originally drew you to becoming an AGSM member?
I moved back into gas services from construction management in 2011 and had no specific gas safety management training. A colleague saw an advertisement in trade press for the CORGI VRQ in Gas Safety Management in Social Housing, this led to becoming a member of the AGSM.

I found both Social Housing and Facilities Management VRQs invaluable, focusing on the processes, procedures and policies required for effective gas management to comply with current gas safety legislation. The AGSM regional forums provide a unique opportunity for gas managers to discuss current issues, develop a consistent approach and best practice.

6. What has been your favourite moment in your career so far?
A career highlight for me is helping to deliver the social housing national Decent Homes house refurbishment programme for Incommunities in Bradford. It has made a real difference to peoples’ lives and helped the AGSM raise the issues in Parliament of capping gas in void properties and gas appliances in social housing properties.

7. Do you have any hidden talents?
A long time ago, I represented Leeds in the regional Plumbing Skill Build Championships as an apprentice, and have a silver medal! Otherwise, does an ability to look gormless whenever people mention social media count?

8. How do you feel the AGSM has changed since you joined 5 years ago?
The AGSM has gone from strength to strength in supporting compliance and safety in social housing. It has become a voice for this sector, effectively lobbying for change on all issues relating to gas safety. Along with regional AGSM forums, it also now provides a national forum & conference. It continues to develop its role and last year introduced the AESM.

9. If you could learn to do anything, what would it be?
Either speak another language - just enough to have a simple conversation would do. Or play piano, to sit and play just one tune would be fine.

10. What would you say to anyone thinking of joining the AGSM?
If you are involved in management of landlord gas or electrical contracts for domestic or commercial properties, the AGSM/AESM is the professional body for this sector of the utilities services industry. It offers invaluable technical and compliance training, with qualifications and support for any issues that arise. It also provides a structure and ethos to develop your organisation’s safety management systems to meet current regulatory and compliance standards. It lobbies for change, provides forums for discussion and continues to innovate, supporting wider gas safety issues.

Darren Fountain, AGSM
Gas Compliance Manager
Incommunities Group Limited

www.agsm.uk.com
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- AGSM/AESM marketing pack for use in corporate member communications
- Corporate member promotion via logos and links on AGSM/AESM website

* Please visit [www.agsm.uk.com/membership](http://www.agsm.uk.com/membership) for full details.

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