



# Solid Fuel Policy

Last reviewed March 2021

# 1.0 Solid Fuel overview

This policy is managed and adhered to by the housing service. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with government legislation, guidance and good practice.

## Contents

### 1.0 Policy overview

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Aim(s) of the policy
- 1.3 Links to the Council's corporate aims
- 1.4 Equality and diversity
- 1.5 Policy statement(s)

### 2.0 Solid Fuel Policy Detail

- 2.1 Annual Servicing
- 2.2 Existing Installations
- 2.3 New Installations
- 2.4 Awareness and Guidance

### 3.0 Links to other corporate strategies and policies

### 4.0 Legislation

## 1.1 Introduction

As a landlord, Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) prioritises the health and safety of all people who live, work in or visit our properties. It is important to us that tenants who are using solid fuel appliances within their homes do this in a safe and risk-free way.

This policy applies to all tenants who have an existing solid fuel appliance in their home. Solid fuel appliances include:

- Multi fuel;
- Wood burners;
- Open fires;
- Or any appliance that uses solid fuel to produce heat.

## 1.2 Aim(s) of the policy:

The aims of this policy are to;

- Ensure the health and safety of people living in or visiting DBC properties;
- Outline our approach to managing the risks involved in using existing solid fuel appliances;
- Clarify our approach to requests for the new installation of a solid fuel appliance;
- Set out our approach to monitoring and carrying out servicing visits;
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation.

## 1.3 Links to Council's corporate aims:

This policy supports council's corporate priority of providing a "clean, safe and enjoyable environment" which is set out in ['Delivering for Dacorum – Corporate Plan 2015-2020'](#).

## 1.4 Equality and diversity

The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all Applicants, Tenants and Leaseholders are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination.

## 1.5 Policy Statement(s)

We will carry out or monitor annual servicing checks to all properties with solid fuel installations and appliances (see 2.1).

Tenants occupying our properties must allow access to their homes in order for us to carry out annual servicing checks as required (see 2.1).

We will reduce our carbon footprint by ensuring existing installations are installed correctly and by refusing permission for new installations (see 2.2 and 2.3).

We will ensure compliance with current legislation and regulatory requirements regarding solid fuel appliances (see 4.0).

# 2.0 Solid fuel policy detail

## 2.0 Solid Fuel Policy Detail

### 2.1) Annual Servicing

We will keep a record of all DBC properties that contain a solid fuel appliance.

To ensure solid fuel appliances are safely managed and maintained we require annual confirmation of:

- Annual chimney sweep (where applicable); and
- Annual service according to manufacturer's instructions.

If the council owns the solid fuel appliance then we will undertake these checks. If the appliance is the tenant's responsibility then they must provide this documentation.

In addition, we will carry out our own safety checks on tenant-owned solid fuel appliances via an annual visual inspection. If the appliance fails the safety check, it will be labelled unsafe and we will advise the tenant not to use it.

Under the Tenancy Agreement signed by all DBC tenants, tenants must allow reasonable access for servicing and maintenance to take place.

If DBC cannot gain access to the property to carry out this servicing work within a reasonable timeframe, enforcement action will be taken. This may result in the council seeking an injunction to gain entry. The tenant may be liable for any costs incurred as a result of court action taken (usually a minimum of £250).

### 2.2) Existing Installations

Tenants who installed existing solid fuel appliances, should have obtained permission from the council and satisfied building control requirements at the time. In addition to this, the appliance should have the following:

- HETAS certification;
- Lined chimney/flue;
- Adequate ventilation; and
- CO detector installed adjacent to the appliance.

The tenant is liable for ensuring all of these measures are in place. If there are any unauthorised appliances installed, we will request their removal.

If the property is within a designated smokeless zone then only smokeless fuels should be burnt. Timber / logs are not classed as smokeless. We recommend burning dry wood (with no more than 20% moisture) as this produces fewer emissions.

### 2.3) New Installations

Tenants will not be given permission to install wood burning stoves or open up chimneys in any way. Burning waste in a solid fuel appliance can produce very high emissions of pollutants, potentially affecting the health of the household and its neighbour's. There is also a risk in terms of chimney fires and carbon monoxide poisoning.

Wood is often treated and burning this can release highly toxic chemicals into the air. Air pollution is a major contributor to climate change and we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint.

If you live in an area of the borough that is not on the gas network, the council will offer you either an electric heating system or air source heat pump as a primary source of heating.

### 2.4) Awareness and Guidance

Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur as a result of neglecting appropriate maintenance/servicing activities, or poor installation of/repairs to appliances. This can have deadly consequences.

We will carry out checks to ensure appliances are installed correctly and will communicate with the tenant to confirm they are aware of the appropriate maintenance required to ensure safe use of their solid fuel appliance.

More information on carbon monoxide and its dangers can be found [here](#).

## 3.0 Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and strategies:

- DBC Tenancy Agreement
- DBC Tenants Handbook
- Fire Safety Policy
- Recharge Policy
- Solid Fuel Appliances Procedure

## 4.0 Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Health & Safety Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety Work Regulations 1999
- Housing Act 2004
- Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- Building Regulations, Approved Documents F, J, L, G, P
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015
- HETAS (Heating Equipment Testing & Approval Services Guidance)