

May 2013

CORGI News



Expect more from CORGI

First Gas Safety Management Conference huge success!

The first Gas Safety Management Conference took place on 24 April 2013 and was a huge success. The 180 delegates came from organisations from across the UK, primarily in social housing and their input will help to shape the way forward for the industry for the next year. Many thanks to everyone who participated in the Conference, including the sponsors and speakers, and to all those who have given us such positive feedback.

It has proved so popular that we are delighted to announce that we have set the date for the 2014 Conference which will take place at the Belfry again on **Tuesday 29 April and Wednesday 30 April 2014**, with a half a day of Conference, Pre-Conference Dinner and golf tournament on **Tuesday 29 April and a full day of Conference on Wednesday 30 April**. More details will be announced over the next few months.

Summaries of the Conference highlights are below and more details and a gallery of photos can be found on the website. www.agsm.uk.com

Please let us have any further thoughts about the 2013 Conference and any ideas about how it can be developed further next year.

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Gas Safety Management Conference 2013 key messages:

- **an increased awareness by senior management in social housing of Corporate Manslaughter responsibilities**
- **more robust procedures and policies for maintenance and audit of gas appliances**
- **greater action on Carbon Monoxide awareness**

A packed Gas Safety Management Conference of 180 Gas Managers, collectively responsible for 1.5 million homes across the UK, heard from a line-up of top speakers who called for senior management in social housing to have an increased awareness of their Corporate Manslaughter responsibilities. They also called for more robust procedures and policies to be in place for the maintenance and audit of gas appliances and to take greater action on Carbon Monoxide awareness.



Claire Heyes, Joint CEO of CORGI Technical Services, launches inaugural Gas Safety Management Conference

Claire Heyes, Joint CEO of CORGI Technical Services welcomed delegates to the Conference and was delighted by the overwhelmingly positive response from Gas Managers to the creation of the event.

“Gas Managers are skilled, knowledgeable, committed and responsible people,” she said. “We set up this Conference to help develop the profession, allow Managers to discuss topical issues, share thoughts and experiences and to determine the actions to be taken forward as an industry. We are delighted with the response – there is a real buzz to the Conference and an enormous appetite from all involved to build on this for the future.”

She addressed the key role of Gas Managers in delivering safe gas work to social housing tenants and organisations. “Having the correct gas-safe policies and procedures in place, in particular through regular maintenance, inspection and an

increased awareness of the issues through regular updates and training, will increase safety in all areas within social housing.”

“We would welcome any suggestions and ideas for next year’s Conference. Please put Wednesday 30th April 2014 in your diaries and we will speak widely with gas managers across the UK in ensuring that we deliver an event that will help them carrying out their crucial role in gas safety management.”



Call for increased awareness by senior management in social housing of Corporate Manslaughter responsibilities

The important issue of Corporate Manslaughter was addressed by Sally Roff of DAC Beachcroft, who has been involved with the preparation of responses to the Corporate Manslaughter Bill.

“Knowledge and awareness of responsibilities at a senior level within social housing are key,” she said. “It is not a defence to say that you didn’t know about what is happening in your organisation or that you didn’t know of your responsibilities. A court would presume you have that level of knowledge. Only three companies have ever been convicted of Corporate Manslaughter, but one judge has made it quite clear that any company that was convicted, would have the level of fine set at such a height that it would ensure the company went out of business.”

Sally drew attention to the individual liability of Directors and senior management as well as companies but stressed that the key is effective management, minimising risk through planning, delivery, monitoring and review.



David Kidney delivers keynote address highlighting action on CO awareness

David Kidney, Chair of the Carbon Monoxide All Fuels Action Forum, gave the keynote speech, and congratulated CORGI for their clear focus on helping raise standards in the energy industry and promote safety in people's homes. He also thanked attendees for their important contribution to our society's fairness, health, wellbeing and sustainability.

He then called on attendees to take one more step forward, to help prevent CO poisoning, saying: "CO is a poisonous gas produced by incomplete burning of carbon-based fuels - even short exposure can kill or cause paralysis and brain damage. Low level exposure over longer periods causes chronic conditions that doctors may confuse with migraine, flu, shortness of breath or chest pain. Research has suggested that a prevalence of CO poisoning is far higher than official statistics indicate - and beyond the 40 deaths, 200 hospital admissions and 4,000 A&E visits a year."

David continued: "The All Fuels Forum works at coordinating awareness-raising, campaigning for law-change, and helping charities which support survivors and victims and their families. It works around CO and fuel poverty - the scale of fuel poverty is massive and the best way to help low income households



is to improve their homes' energy efficiency. Where energy efficiency measures make homes more airtight, we need to be all the more vigilant to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning."

David encouraged the audience to contact the Forum for any support, offering to disseminate good practice, and helping to raise awareness of the risks of CO. He ended his speech by highlighting that CO safety - getting appliances serviced, fitting audible CO alarms, and raising awareness of poisoning - can ensure that residents remain fit and healthy and help build stronger communities.

Chris Bielby MBE addresses key solutions to reducing CO poisoning cases

Chris Bielby MBE, the first President of the Association of Gas Safety Managers, spoke about the work that had been done by major organisations such as British Gas, the Health & Safety Executive and other organisations such as charities, the Government and industry to raise awareness about carbon monoxide issues. He noted that CO incidents had reduced over the last 40 years since reporting started, but that there was much more to be done.

"I believe that CO alarms should be mandatory for all properties that are the responsibility of Housing Associations. Maintenance of gas appliances by qualified engineers is the key and the correct policies and procedures must be in place to ensure they are properly maintained and audited. CO alarms are also crucial - there is much more that can be done to raise awareness of the dangers."

He picked on some key actions that were helping including penalising unregistered gas installers, increased regular servicing of appliances, replacement of open flue appliances, coordinated efforts to increase customer awareness, increased usage and legislation for CO alarms and increased awareness amongst the medical profession.



Cost vs Compliance – the view from St Vincents Housing Association

High on the agenda for all Housing Associations are the challenges of weighing up 'Costs versus Compliance'. Charlie Norman is Chief Executive of St Vincent Housing Association which has 3,000 affordable homes throughout the north-west. She put forward her organisation's approach to this crucial issue.

"Our number one priority is to have 100% compliance, 100% staff focus and total support from the Board and executive to health and safety issues," said Charlie. "We have good policies in place, have a high level of awareness of our corporate manslaughter responsibilities and are fully compliant with our legal obligations as a landlord. There can be no compromise on these issues. To achieve it, we work in partnership with our engineers, have regular meetings, a solid replacement programme and a good procurement process. We work hard to keep control of our costs without compromising on compliance obligations."



Inaugural National Inter-Authority Gas Forum session

The inaugural National Inter-Authority Gas Forum session was held during the Gas Safety Management Conference. Kevin Winship, Technical Safety Manager for CORGI Technical Services drew delegates' attention to a specific issue that was creating concern – the responsibility of landlords for fires and cookers within properties, including those belonging to tenants.

"Landlords have duties on any appliance that the tenant cannot legally remove as well as any that have been left by a departing tenant," he said. "Unsafe equipment needs to be rectified or removed before a new tenancy starts. Putting in place best practice processes, having a thorough understanding of the regulations and ensuring maintenance procedures are carried out correctly will mitigate the risks that could be encountered."



Harrowing tale of Stacey and Dominic

Chris Bielby was joined by Stacey Rodgers of the Dominic Rodgers Trust who gave a very moving account of her tragic experience ten years ago when her ten year old son died of carbon monoxide poisoning from a leak from a downstairs flat. She is now a passionate campaigner for raising awareness of the need for installing CO alarms.

Delegates to the Conference were so moved by her story that they requested details about how to make donations to the Dominic Rodgers Trust. Please make cheques payable to "The Dominic Rodgers Trust" and post them to Office F5, The Media Centre, 7 Northumberland Street, Huddersfield HD1 1RL. <https://sites.google.com/site/dominicrodgerstrust/home>

Nottingham City Homes first to receive CORGI Accreditation.

At the Pre-Conference Presentation Dinner Nottingham City Homes were presented with their certificate for being the first organisation to receive CORGI Accreditation. Pictured receiving their certificate from Bill Paton, Joint CEO of CORGI Technical Services are Paul Ruston, Martin Bates and Steve Cooper of Nottingham City Homes.

Paul Ruston said: "The Accreditation process has been excellent for us and I thoroughly recommend anyone to go through the process. We can now be assured that all of our processes and procedures meet all legislative and best practice requirements."



Extract from Origin Housing Newsletter

"Alan's top of the class"

Congratulations to Property Services very own Alan Martin on his recently acquired Certificate in Gas Safety Management in Social Housing. This is a new qualification, launched in Oct 2011, which is aimed at bringing together the technical and management aspects of gas safety into one qualification.

The certificate was presented with his award from Trevor Batt of CORGI, who was 'very impressed' with Alan who he said had achieved the qualification faster than anyone else and he is amongst the first 50 people in the country to be awarded his certificate. Bob Watts commented that "Origin is indeed fortunate to have Alan as part of our team which continues to ensure our residents are safe in their homes as we continue to maintain a 100% record for gas safety."

Well done Alan!



Level 4 VRQ successes!

Danielle Godridge - Service Contact Co-ordinator, GreenSquare Group

"I have to say I feel really pleased that I've completed this course and passed!

The knowledge I've gained has certainly been worth the hard work and the commitment has paid off. It's been a fascinating journey and I've learnt so much throughout the course.

I frequently have been able to use the knowledge I've gained from each module and apply it to my job and share that knowledge with others!

I think it's great how the modules are varied in their content and almost take you on a Gas journey! It doesn't just focus on legislation or technical information but combines all aspects of gas safety in practical and technical terms. "

Events

Level 2 VRQ in Gas Safety Awareness in Social Housing

Course dates for 2013 for the new Level 2 VRQ in Gas Safety Awareness in Social Housing:-

- Edinburgh – 15 May
- London – 22 May
- Yorkshire – 13 June
- Bristol – 2 July
- Newcastle – 3 July
- Cardiff – 17 Sept
- North East – 19 Sept
- Liverpool – 17 Oct
- Birmingham – 23 Oct
- Leeds – 26 Nov

Details about how to book on the course can be found at:-

www.corgitechnical.com or by contacting
training@corgitechnical.com or 01256 548040

Level 4 VRQ in Gas Safety Management for Social Housing course start dates in 2013:-

- London – 5 June
- Yorkshire – 13 June
- Birmingham – 10 July
- Manchester – 18 July
- Portsmouth – 11 Sept
- Glasgow – 19 Sept
- Cardiff – 24 Sept
- North East – 22 Oct
- London – 20 Nov

Level 4 VRQ in Gas Safety Facilities Management course start dates in 2013:-

- Birmingham – 11 June
- North West – 18 July
- Manchester - 10 Sept
- London – 1 Oct
- London – 16 Oct
- Glasgow – 19 Nov
- Cardiff – 4 Dec

In-house courses can also be run on request.

Dates for next Regional Inter-Authority Gas Forum events

Glasgow

Wed 10 July 2012
Wed 20 Nov 2013

North East

Tues 11 June 2013
Wed 30 Oct 2013

Yorkshire

Wed 12 June 2013
Wed 16 Oct 2013

Midlands

Wed 26 June 2013
Wed 13 Nov 2013

London

Wed 3 July 2013
Wed 27 Nov 2013

South West

Wed 15 May 2013
Wed 18 Sept 2013

Contact us at **gasforum@corgitechnical.com** if you would like to attend.



Corgi in the News

Call for increased awareness of corporate manslaughter – H&V News - 30/4/2013. [Read Further](#)

Social housing management should increase awareness of its Corporate Manslaughter responsibilities - 24 Housing – 30/4/2013. [Read Further](#)

Life saving measures – Inside Housing – 12/4/2013. [Read Further](#)

David Kidney gives keynote speech at Gas Safety Management Conference – Policy Connect. [Read Further](#)

In the News

Landlord issues seven day gas check ultimatum – Inside Housing 10/4/2013. [Read Further](#)

Blackburn landlord fine over carbon monoxide poisoning - HSE. [Read Further](#)

Your Feedback is needed!

We very much value your feedback on the VRQ courses, the Gas Forum events, the AGSM and any other aspects of the services we are providing. Please make comments using this email link tellus@corgitechnical.com and we will follow up.



CORGI Technical Services Ltd

CORGI Technical Services Ltd has over 30 years of technical expertise in all aspects of gas safety. With comprehensive site audits, training for employees, a new VRQ gas safety qualification, legal advice and expert witness testimony, CORGI works with local authorities, housing associations, private landlords, contractors, energy suppliers and the travel industry, to support them with their gas safety obligations, compliance and continued improvement.

www.corgitechnical.com

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