

Delivering a sustainable and positive impact on communities

Leading best practice in South Wales gas servicing contracts



Clients	Newport City Homes Pembrokeshire Housing Rhondda Cynon Taf Homes Valleys to Coast Housing
Services	Gas safety, gas maintenance and central heating renewals services to residential and commercial properties
Contract start date	Newport City Homes – April 2010 Pembrokeshire Housing – March 2003 Rhondda Cynon Taf Homes – April 2009 Valleys to Coast Housing – various
Duration	Newport City Homes – 5 years Pembrokeshire Housing – 8 years Rhondda Cynon Taf Homes – 5 years Valleys to Coast Housing – heating installations as required
Value	Total contract value – various

Our gas servicing contracts demand constant innovation and adaptation to achieve high levels of customer service and drive down costs. Through a combination of our gas sector expertise and training, we’re setting a high standard for gas servicing contracts across South Wales.

We manage several large gas servicing agreements, carrying out safety checks at over 24,700 properties.

We use the experience of our own workforce and we retrain staff from partner organisations. This commitment ensures our customer service is of the highest standard and that we can make cost savings.

Our Gas Safe registered engineers work across the area to service tenants’ gas appliances on a yearly basis. We make sure that each social landlord can provide their tenants with an up-to-date Landlords’ Annual Gas Safety Certificate.

To date we’ve accessed over 90 per cent of properties in all areas to carry out

these vital safety checks. And in our most successful areas of Newport and Rhondda Cynon Taf, we’ve achieved an improved success rate of 98 per cent.

Tackling long-standing problems

In Newport, there has been long-standing problems with tenant bookings. We came up with a solution that involved working with a Newport City Homes (NCH) tenant liaison officer to contact tenants and arrange an appointment, as well as reconfirm the booking. In this way, we’ve ensured that more appointments actually take place. We’ve also offered flexible appointments on Saturdays or early evenings at no added cost to NCH.



**We’ll save
RCT homes
£1m
in service
charges over
five years**

Pembrokeshire Housing: educating households about the dangers of CO

We've introduced a same-day response and out-of-hours service for Pembrokeshire Housing, which we monitor on an ongoing basis. We also work directly with tenants to educate them about gas safety and raise awareness of the dangers of faulty gas appliances. We've directly targeted householders with messages about the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and the importance of having appliances checked regularly – this forms part of our wider work to raise awareness of gas safety in the community.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Homes: saving £1 million a year

In the borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), we're responsible for completing safety checks on all gas appliances in 10,000 residential and commercial properties managed by RCT Homes – the largest social landlord in Wales.

Our gas servicing partnership with RCT Homes is projected to save the organisation £1 million a year on annual service charges. We've done this by:

- carrying out a competitive re-tendering process
- using existing resources more efficiently
- improving processes and productivity

We're also working with members of RCT Homes' local housing team to tackle over 300 previously inaccessible properties. We work closely with housing officers to confirm bookings and we've assigned a member of our own workforce to carry out gas safety checks in properties at short notice. This allows us to offer flexible appointment dates to suit tenants, providing better customer service.

Valleys to Coast Housing: reducing emissions by 3,000 tonnes a year

We're involved in Valleys to Coast (V2C) Housing's central heating renewal programme on an ad hoc basis. This is a project where existing heating systems are renewed if they fail to meet requirements.

During 2009, we installed the new central heating system. According to calculations from the Energy Savings Trust Wales,

our work will save people living in V2C-owned properties more than £600,000 a year collectively. Improvements in energy efficiency will also benefit the environment by reducing CO emissions by more than 3,000 tonnes a year.

We've provided 39 staff from V2C Housing with a training course to raise awareness of the dangers of CO poisoning – known as the 'silent killer'. This training, plus a series of courses for V2C Housing's managers in electrical awareness and customer awareness, means V2C has benefitted from our skills and expertise in lasting ways.

Supporting local communities to achieve

In all four areas in South Wales, we aim to build a workforce using local tradespeople. We want to create opportunities for people to improve their skills and training at the Connaught Academy and in the gas servicing industry.

In Newport, 70 per cent of staff on the gas contract are from the local area. In RCT Homes, 83 per cent of employees working on the RCT Homes project live locally. And all Pembrokeshire Housing and V2C employees are from the local area.

Reaching the wider community

We're keen to share what we do with others. We provide gas safety information for inclusion in our partner organisations' newsletters, which target tenants directly; we've developed media campaigns in several areas to reach the family and friends of tenants. And we've taken part in campaigns coinciding with National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week to reach young people, with the aim of passing on information to older family members. By reaching out to these groups, we're able to raise gas safety awareness with a wide cross-section of society.

Peter Carnegie, Connaught area partnership manager, said: "We are committed to helping registered social landlords maintain their stock and ensure that gas appliances in homes are safe.

"We continue to carry out important legal compliance work by regularly inspecting gas appliances at local homes. It's our aim to provide a total peace of mind for landlords and their tenants."

We carry out gas safety checks at over 24,700 properties in South Wales



"Our energy efficiency work with V2C will reduce carbon monoxide emissions by 3,000 tonnes a year"