

Briefing: How a register of Gas Safe certificates can protect tenants

CFPD & TLIC - APRIL 2024

We need better data on the UK's gas boilers and appliances to ensure landlords are keeping their tenants safe. The Government could do this by requiring annual Gas Safe certificates to be registered centrally, just like Energy Performance Certificates already are.

Background

Gas boilers are a safety concern. Landlords are legally required to get an annual Gas Safe certificate for all gas appliances provided, but it's estimated one-fifth of the UK's landlords don't do so. Without central records, tenants could be at risk and councils cannot easily target rogue landlords.

Although millions of paper Gas Safe documents are issued each year, they are not kept on a central register. This means local authorities cannot check which landlords are not complying and intervene if needed – making tenants less safe. It also creates inefficiencies in the lettings process, as Gas Safe certificates must be passed manually between landlords, tenants and agents.

Recommendations

The Government could tackle this by creating a central register of Gas Safe certificates. There are precedents for this. The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) register was established to support environmental missions by centralising data on the energy efficiency of homes, and is now a rich source of energy data.

We recommend the Government should consult on the following:

- A centrally-managed register of Gas Safe certificates
- A requirement that Gas Safe engineers make all certificates available to the register.

This register should be:

- Built around Unique Property Reference Numbers (UPRN's), so it can be easily joined to other property datasets – this will increase its value
- Freely shared with other public bodies for policy purposes, and potentially published (minus personal information) to support policy analysis and letting agents' checks
- Linked with the new landlord register and property portal via the UPRN, so that landlords who don't fulfil their legal obligations can be targeted for enforcement

Benefits

- **Ability to target enforcement easily resulting in a safer private rented sector**
- **Efficiencies for the lettings industry – easy data sharing once uploaded**
- **Data to support innovation – e.g. automated renewal reminders for landlords and the Smart Data agenda**

Next Steps

We would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss the above recommendations in more depth. You can reach us on either of the emails below.

About us

The Centre for Public Data (CFPD) is a non-partisan non-profit that works to improve the quality of data published or regulated by the government. contact@centreforpublicdata.org.

The Lettings Industry Council (TLIC) is a group with extensive lettings experience and collaborate to feed into the Government, DLUHC, tenant bodies and journalists with 'one voice.' They are the key providers of accurate and up-to-date data and supporting evidence and aim to share their knowledge to inform and educate the sector ultimately providing benefits to the consumer. thelettingsindustrycouncil@outlook.com