

CROYDON COUNCIL HOUSING

# Gas Safety Policy

The Policy outlines the London Borough of Croydon's approach to managing Gas Safety in Council owned and managed properties

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy outlines the Council's approach to managing gas safety and controlling the risks associated with gas appliances in properties where the Council has a legal responsibility to comply with the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended (GSIUR) and other legislation and codes of practice.
- 1.2. This policy also applies to council-owned and managed properties with alternative heating sources, e.g., electrical heaters and ground source heat pumps.
- 1.3. Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a danger to anyone with a fuel-burning appliance in the home. CO is odourless, colourless, and tasteless, meaning that people will not detect this lethal poison. Regular servicing and safety checks of appliances such as gas boilers, gas fires and flues and fossil fuel-using appliances ensure the appliances are combusting safely and efficiently. This minimises the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning or explosion associated with natural gas.
- 1.4. This policy is designed to ensure that the Housing Directorate takes all reasonably practicable steps to minimise and manage risks associated with gas and other forms of heating to customers, employees, visitors and stakeholders.

## 2. Statement of intent

- 2.1. LB Croydon Housing Directorate is committed, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of persons at its premises. Risks associated with gas and CO exist where gas appliances and other sources of heating are installed in properties. The housing directorate accepts it has a legal duty with respect to the safety of its premises, and a responsibility to protect its customers, employees and others from such risks. LB Croydon will provide resources, information, training, and supervision as is needed for this purpose.
- 2.2. The Regulator for Social Housing's (RSH) Safety and Quality Standard requires that Registered Providers meet all applicable statutory requirements for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes, including gas safety.
- 2.3. In order to mitigate risk and meet statutory obligations set out in the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and other associated legislation, and to ensure good practice is followed in the supply and maintenance of gas appliances and other sources of heating the Housing Directorate will:
  - Ensure that gas fittings, flues, and appliances are maintained in good order and are checked for safety once in every period of 12 months.
  - Keep a record of the safety checks for at least two years.
  - Ensure that all new tenants are given a copy of the Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) before occupancy.

- Issue a copy of the latest safety check record to existing tenants within 28 days of the check being completed.
- Ensure that all void properties and mutual exchanges have been checked for gas safety before re-letting.
- Ensure that anyone carrying out work on gas appliances or fittings is competent and registered with the Gas Safety Register
- Communicate with residents regarding gas safety.

### 3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all the domestic housing properties and all work undertaken in these properties on our behalf. We are not responsible for gas safety in leasehold properties. However, we will remind leaseholders annually of the importance of carrying out a gas safety check. For checks we undertake in communal areas, leaseholders will be recharged.
- 3.2. Typical installations and systems covered include boilers, flues, fires, and associated pipework.
- 3.3. The policy applies to Council employees, contractors, tenants, and other persons or other stakeholders who may work on, occupy, visit, or use its premises, or who may be affected by its activities or services.

### 4. Legal framework

- 4.1. The legislation, standard, and guidance that applies to gas safety in residential properties are listed in **section 36** of this document.

### 5. Annual gas safety checks on domestic units

- 5.1. We shall arrange for a gas-safe registered contractor to carry out an annual gas safety check on each appliance and/or flue that is provided for tenant use. Each existing tenant will be issued a copy of the safety certificate (LGSR) within 28 days of it being completed.
- 5.2. Any gas appliances that fail the safety check will be disconnected from the gas supply and the tenant instructed not to use them until they can be repaired or replaced. The repair or replacement will then be prioritised in line with our Repairs Procedure. A record of all gas safety checks (the LGSR) must be kept for two years in an electronic format.
- 5.3. The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 enables landlords to have the annual gas safety check carried out any time from 10 to 12 calendar months after the previous check but still retain the original deadline date as if the check had been carried out exactly 12 months after the previous check. Landlords can take advantage of this flexibility if they wish but are under no obligation to do so.

### 6. Annual gas safety checks on communal units

- 6.1. We shall arrange to carry out an annual gas safety check on communal installations. Notice relating to gas safety shall be publicly displayed at each building served by a communal system to confirm that regular gas safety checks are carried out. A copy of the current certified inspection is available to any tenant or leaseholder upon request. Where we have commercial boilers with over 70 kW heat input, we shall ensure they receive two services per year, comprising one major and one minor service. They will also continue to receive the landlord gas safety check annually, usually as part of the major service.

## 7. Gas repairs

- 7.1. Responsive gas repairs will be carried out within the timescales set out in our Repairs Procedure. Where major repairs require the removal of a tenant, we will follow the Decants Procedure.
- 7.2. Gas Safety Register Technical Bulletin 008 addresses the potential risks of internal flues. All internal flues must have been checked to ensure that pipework is not damaged and, where appropriate, inspection hatches installed.

## 8. New tenancy

- 8.1. New tenants will receive a copy of the LGSR as they move in. Any appliances installed by the previous tenant will be removed before re-letting. No appliances should be gifted to the incoming tenant.

## 9. Mutual exchange

- 9.1. Gas Safety checks for mutual exchanges will be carried out in accordance with the Mutual Exchange Procedure. Before an exchange can be completed, it must be established that there is a valid LGSR for the property. If there is not a valid LGSR, a check must be completed before the exchange goes ahead. It is the outgoing tenant's responsibility to ensure that if there is no valid LGSR, they allow access to a contractor to carry out the gas check. Where the tenant does not allow access for the gas safety check, the standard access procedure will be followed.
- 9.2. Any appliances installed by the previous tenant will be removed before re-letting. No appliances should be gifted to the incoming tenant. Because the mutual exchange is treated as a new tenancy, it must be ensured that the exchange is not completed until the safety check has been completed.
- 9.3. The undertaking of a safety check and servicing of the gas appliances and subsequent issue of a new LGSR, (or other appropriate checking and certification in respect to oil or solid fuel appliances), as part of a new letting or mutual exchange process, will have the effect of re-setting the clock on the requirement of the next LGSR or other such checks on oil or solid fuel appliances and therefore needs to be recorded within the Gas servicing database.

## 10. Voids

- 10.1. When a property that is self-contained and does not share a gas meter becomes void, in **all** cases it should be arranged for the gas supply to be capped as soon as

reasonably practicable following the return of keys (within 24 hours of hand back or the next working day).

- 10.2. Once void works have been completed, and the gas supply reinstated or a new energy supplier selected, the gas operative must return to uncap the supply and conduct a full service and safety check, issuing a Landlord's Gas Safety Record to this effect. This LGSR will remain valid for up to 12 months unless further works that may affect the safe operation of the appliances or gas supply are undertaken in the property whilst empty.

## 11. Planned maintenance.

- 11.1. Planned maintenance is carried out on domestic and commercial installations, including a programme of boiler replacements and council heating improvements. Planned maintenance programmes will be determined annually and will consider any recommendations from local gas servicing contractors.
- 11.2. Cyclical maintenance will be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for appliances. They will be serviced annually and/or dealt with in accordance with the advice of a certified Gas Safe Register installer.
- 11.3. Where responsive repairs, planned maintenance, or issues identified at the annual safety check result in no heating being available in the property, contractors are contractually required to provide sufficient alternative heating arrangements. This can be especially important for vulnerable residents and will normally consist of a minimum of two fan-type heaters.

## 12. New build and refurbishment

- 12.1. On new build properties and those undergoing substantial refurbishment or major repairs, an LGSR inspection will be required at the point of handover (a maximum of 10 days beforehand), regardless of whether an LGSR has already been issued. The benchmark document & Gas Safe building compliance notification will be provided by the installer(s).

## 13. Gas appliances

- 13.1. We shall inspect the council-owned gas appliances, pipework, and flues which are installed in all relevant properties for which we are responsible. When gas cookers owned by us need replacing, they may be replaced by an electric cooker of similar functional capability, with the gas supply to the cooker point being capped- off permanently. The gas supply pipe will be removed where it is practical to do so.
- 13.2. In general, tenants and leaseholders are responsible for the safety of cookers or other resident-owned appliances, however, pipework remains our responsibility. On inspection, if any installation undertaken by the resident or managing agent is found to be defective then the contractor will terminate the gas supply and make recommendations for required repairs.
- 13.3. Installations by external managing agents are not required to be inspected by the landlord.

13.4. The Council is responsible for all other gas/oil/solid fuel appliances which are fixtures. In general, tenants and leaseholders are responsible for the safety of cookers or other resident-owned appliances.

## 14. Flame supervision devices

14.1. Wherever a new flue-less gas appliance (such as a cooker) is installed in a multi-occupancy dwelling, it must have a Flame Supervision Device (FSD), which will cut off the gas if it detects that the flame goes out. Primarily, it is the responsibility of tenants and leaseholders to ensure that appliances such as their owned cookers have FSDs, but where we own such appliances, for example in supported housing or temporary accommodation, we will ensure that the appliances comply with these regulations. Contractors must note any non-complying cookers on the annual safety check certificate and, where relevant, inform the resident of the regulations.

## 15. Use of limiters

15.1. The Council fits service interval timers on gas systems in properties that have a record of being difficult to access. These appliances do not cut off the use of the boiler but limit use to one-hour periods for up to ninety hours. This encourages the resident to contact the Council to arrange for the annual service.

## 16. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) appliances

16.1. We will not permit residents to install any portable LPG appliances (including gas barbecues) in their homes. Where they are identified in our properties, we shall ensure that they are removed as a matter of priority and, where appropriate, replaced with alternative fixed appliances.

## 17. Pressure vessels

17.1. We will identify all pressure vessels associated with commercial boiler plants and ensure that these are inspected on a 12-month cycle as required by the Pressure System Safety Regulations 2000 (PSSR). Defects identified during statutory inspection are notified to the Gas Team who are responsible for managing the rectification of defects through their planned & reactive maintenance contracts.

## 18. Communal flues

18.1. All communal flues shall be inspected every 12 months by an independent inspector, and a report outlining their condition and recommending remedial actions will be issued to the Council.

## 19. Gas certificates

19.1. Where relevant for domestic properties, a new LGSR (or other appropriate certification for oil and solid fuel appliances) will be completed following works and passed on to us. This includes, but is not limited to:

- work directly on gas oil or solid fuel appliances or pipework.
- any repair or building work to a roof, chimney, or flue which could cause a

blockage.

- where cavity wall insulation, double-glazing, or mechanical extraction are to be installed in properties where an open-flue gas appliance is fitted.

19.2. For communal heating, a copy of the non-domestic GCSC (Gas and Combustion Safety Check) will be posted in the main lobby area. A copy will be available upon request to all residents.

## 20. Access arrangements

20.1. The legislation permits us to enter a tenant's property to view the condition and state of repair, provided that the occupier is given at least 24 hours written notice. It is also a condition of the tenancy agreement that tenants must provide access to their properties for a gas check.

20.2. We retain the responsibility to ensure that gas safety checks are carried out, even where there are access difficulties. The gas servicing team follows set procedures to gain access. This involves:

- informing the tenant by letter of the inspection.
- Leave a response card requesting the tenant to call the gas safety team to arrange an appointment.
- making a forced entry, following procedures set out in the Tenancy Agreement (in certain cases).
- Legal action to obtain access

## 21. Capping of gas supplies

21.1. In general, we will not cap the gas supply externally to achieve compliance where access to the annual gas service is proving problematic.

21.2. However, in circumstances where there is a strong suspicion that the property has been abandoned, or where a tenant has indicated that they will be away from the property for a period and is unable to allow access in good time, it is acceptable to cap the supply externally (in the latter case, with the agreement of the tenant).

21.3. Where a gas supply has been capped for reasons of no access to annual servicing, a competent person should visit the premises at least every four weeks to confirm that the cap is still in place and that the situation has not changed. If the property is at an increased risk of removal, weekly visits to the premises should be made and documented until access is gained.

21.4. Following the capping of a gas supply to any occupied property or property with a 'live' tenancy, staff must continue to take all reasonable steps in line with this procedure to gain entry for the completion of the annual service and safety check.

21.5. Tenants who request the gas to be capped due to financial hardship should be given tenancy sustainment and financial advice before the cap is agreed upon. The Safeguarding Adults Procedure should also be considered, including whether a referral should be made.

21.6. Where a gas supply has been capped because the tenant has requested it, a competent person should visit the premises at least annually to confirm that the cap is still in place and that the situation has not changed. In addition, the tenant should be contacted regarding the situation at least every six months to offer financial advice and check whether any changes need to be made.

21.7. In vacant properties, the supply shall always be capped as soon as the tenant has vacated the property. With disposals and removals, the property will be capped upon termination of tenancy. The property will therefore be disposed of with a capped supply.

## 22. Specific requirements

22.1. In line with relevant gas safety regulations, all newly installed appliances shall be room-sealed regardless of location.

## 23. Quality assurance

23.1. An independent QA company checks 10% of repairs and servicing and 100% of installations. Where appropriate, the Council may use external quality assurance services, particularly where there are concerns with a particular contractor's work.

23.2. In addition to the checking of the contractor's certificates, the Council's designated external auditor will carry out sample checks throughout on a proportion of all certificates received.

23.3. This third-party external auditor will also be engaged to undertake independent checking of the gas, oil, and solid fuel safety and servicing process which will include the checking of LGSRs and other similar documents relating to oil and solid fuel installation.

23.4. Each contractor will be responsible for conducting their quality checks and inspection by agreed contract terms.

## 24. Communicating gas safety to residents

24.1. New tenants are given advice on gas safety and are shown how to use the heating controls at sign-up, they are also given a Gas Safety leaflet providing information and basic precautions around gas safety in the home. In addition, information on gas servicing and safety is available on the Council's website.

## 25. Competence

25.1. Only approved competent gas contractors and engineers shall be allowed to work on or install any of our gas systems and appliances. Both the operative and the gas contractor shall be registered with the relevant competency scheme i.e., the Gas Safe Register.

25.2. All contractors shall be required to show evidence of their Gas Safe Registration and provide full details of individual engineers' qualifications and accreditations, that they are Gas Safe registered and adequate to certify the relevant work.

25.3. All contractors working with oil and solid fuel appliances will also be competent to do so and hold current registrations:

- HETAS - Solid fuel
- OFTEC-Oil.

## 26. Gas emergencies

26.1. All suspected gas escapes and suspected carbon monoxide poisoning should be reported to National Grid Gas plc. The National Grid Gas Plc Emergency Service telephone number is **0800 111 999**. In the event of gas being temporarily capped due to a response to a gas leak, only a competent person (Gas Safe) is allowed to reinstate the supply and re-commission the installation.

## 27. RIDDOR reporting

27.1. In relation to gas safety, there are duties imposed upon gas conveyers, suppliers, to report cases whereby death or a major injury (as defined by regulations) occurs out of or in connection with the gas supplied. Gas engineers have a duty to formally report certain situations where it is deemed likely that the gas installation may cause death or major injury.

## 28. Carbon Monoxide alarms

28.1. We will install carbon monoxide detector/alarm in properties managed by the Council that has gas appliances. Where detectors/alarms are installed, our gas contractors test them during the annual gas safety checks. A programme of carbon monoxide detector/alarm installation will be established and managed through the Gas Team procedures.

## 29. Smoke detectors and Heat detectors

29.1. Smoke and heat detectors will be tested in line with the 5 yearly EICR (Electrical Installation Condition Reports) programme.

29.2. This will be covered in the Electrical Policy.

## 30. Responsibilities

### 30.1. Director of Housing Assets and Repairs

- Strategic responsibility for the management of gas safety and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained.
- Appoint a Responsible Person/Persons to oversee the implementation of this

policy in relation to properties for which they are responsible.

- Ensure that resources are made available to allow the actions and measures detailed in this Policy and any associated procedures to be effectively delivered.

### 30.2. **Building Safety and Compliance**

Reporting on gas safety compliance performance to the Director of Housing – Assets and Repairs, the Compliance Board, and the Corporate Director of Housing

Ensure that any non-compliance and/or health and safety-related issues are brought to the attention of the Director of Housing Assets and Repairs.

### 30.3. **Gas servicing and repair**

Undertake audits and compliance checks to ensure that the Council is performing its duty-holder obligations. This will include QA checks and audits of gas, other fuel installation, and pressure vessel safety processes and inspections undertaken by service providers.

### 30.4. **Project and Planned works**

Consider at the outset of any project/repair, any risks associated with the associated gas, other fuel, and pressure vessel installations then act accordingly to mitigate the risk(s).

### 30.5. **Tenants**

- Tenancy/occupancy agreement requires tenants to allow the landlord access to the property for annual gas servicing and maintenance of oil and solid fuel appliances.
- Immediately report any concerns with gas, oil, or solid fuel appliances, and turn them off until they are checked by a gas safe registered person or another competent person in the case of oil or solid fuel appliances.

## 31. Performance reporting

31.1. Key performance indicator (KPI) measures will be established and maintained to ensure the monitoring and reporting performance in relation to gas safety.

## 32. GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018

32.1. Housing Management recognise the commitment to ensure that all data is:

- Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.
- Collected for a specific and legitimate purpose and not used for anything other than this stated purpose, or as provided for in our privacy and fair processing notices.

- Relevant and limited to whatever the requirements are for which the data is processed.
- Accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date. Any identified inaccuracies will be amended or removed without undue delay.
- Stored for as long as required, as specified within Housing Management's Records Retention Policy.
- Secured with appropriate solutions, which protect the data against unauthorised or unlawful processing and accidental loss, destruction, or damage.

Further information about the Council's commitment to the General Data Protection Regulations can be found on the Council's website.

### 33. Record keeping

- 33.1. All information regarding the installations, safety certificates, servicing, location, condition, quantity, re-inspection, and recommendations will be recorded by the Gas contractor and provided to the Gas team. The Gas team will also hold key gas, other fuel, and pressure vessel compliance data.
- 33.2. If any responsive repair needs to be carried out to an installation, the appointed contractor attending the address must be provided with the safety certificate and servicing records, and any other available information relating to the installation. In many instances the responsive repairs contractor for gas or other fuel installations will also be the annual maintenance/servicing contractor so this requirement should be achievable without reference to other systems.
- 33.3. For planned works, it is expected that the Gas contractor will be provided with all available information regarding gas, other fuel installations and pressure vessels, and any other relevant aspects e.g., asbestos register, etc., and that any associated risks will reflect in the Gas contractor's risk assessments.
- 33.4. Detailed records of the gas appliances and heating assets to be reviewed annually prior to the cyclical Gas Servicing programme.
- 33.5. LGSRs, benchmark certificates, and manufacturers extended warranties will be held with the compliance team.

### 34. Reasonable adjustments

- 34.1 Croydon Council will make reasonable adjustments to support our residents' needs when they access our services. The term 'reasonable' refers to what we can do without compromising our resources, efficiency, or ability to practically fulfil requests. This does not include [Aids and Adaptations](#) to our properties and common parts of a building.
- 34.2 No resident should be at a disadvantage when accessing our services. The following statements offer a general overview to ensure that our services are

adjusted to meet the needs of our residents where possible. This list is not exhaustive, and we will adapt our approach based on individual resident needs.

34.3 We aim to provide services that are accessible to all who require them. As a result of this, we will:

- Ensure our officers get to know our residents and their individual needs
- Provide a range of ways for residents to contact our officers including phone, mail, email and via [Housing Online](#)
- Provide alternative communication methods on request, such as Braille, foreign language interpreter, large print etc.
- Ensure residents are always able to select their preferred method of contact.
- Ensure our offices are fully accessible to visitors

34.4 We will continue to diversify our services to meet residents' needs where possible.

## 35. Monitoring and review

35.1. Arrangement for a full internal audit of the domestic gas servicing process to be undertaken by the Council's Internal Auditors. The full scope of the audit will be agreed upon with the Internal Auditors, the Compliance Manager, the Gas Servicing Manager, and the Director of Housing Assets and Repairs.

35.2. This Policy will be reviewed and amended as and when significant changes in regulations, statute, guidance, etc., incidents involving gas, other fuel, and pressure vessel installation causing harm to personnel, transfer or increase of premises, outcomes from service provider monthly meetings; or if arrangements within this procedure are no longer considered to be adequate.

## 36. Legislation and standards

36.1. The following legislation and standards apply to this policy.

### Legislation

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (As amended)
- The Gas Safety (Rights of Entry) Regulations 1996
- ACOP L56: Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances
- The Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000
- The Environment Protection Act 1990
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Fire Safety Reform Order 2005
- The Building Safety Act 2022

- HSE Guidance: Landlords: A guide to landlords' duties: Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gas/landlords/index.htm>.
- Compliance with HETAS guidance (solid fuel systems)
- Gas Safety Register Technical Bulletin 008

## 37. Related documents

- Gas Procedure for Private Sector Leasing (PSL) scheme, the Croylease Scheme, and the Guaranteed Rent Scheme (GRS)
- Fire Safety Policy

## 38. Appeals and complaints

### Compliments

38.1. If a tenant would like to let us know when they have received good service, we ask them to contact us.

38.2. They can do this by:

- Visiting our website [www.croydon.gov.uk](http://www.croydon.gov.uk) and follow the links online
- Telephoning our customer contact centre on 020 8726 6101
- Contact the council in writing.

### Complaints

38.3. We take the satisfaction of our tenants and leaseholders very seriously, and if they are not satisfied with the handling or execution of their service or repair, they have the option to raise a formal complaint. We strive to provide high-quality service and we welcome all feedback to help us improve our services.

38.4. When a tenant or leaseholder feels that something has gone wrong, a complaint should be made to the Council as soon as possible after the repair was completed.

38.5. The target time for a response to be issued, is ten working days from receipt of a complaint in compliance with the Housing Ombudsmen Complaints Code.

38.6. Further information can be found in the Complaint Handling Policy.

## 39. Glossary of terms

39.1. **LGSR - (Landlord Gas Service Record)**

39.2. LGSR is a form approved by the Health and Safety Executive which qualified Gas Engineers (Gas Safe registered) completes once the relevant safety checks have been carried out.

39.3. **HETAS - (Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme)**

39.4. HETAS are the governing body of solid fuel domestic heating appliances, fuels and services and are responsible for the registration of competent installers and businesses.

39.5. **Solid Fuel Appliance** - means any appliance, fittings or flue operated using solid fuel within premises owned or managed by the landlord.

## 40. Stakeholder consultation

40.1. Staff with responsibility and operational knowledge of gas repairs and servicing have to be consulted during the development of the policy. The consultation will be carried out through the different management levels before seeking approval from the Compliance Steering Group.

40.2. The Council's Legal team has reviewed the policy.

40.3. Residents have engaged and been consulted in the development and review of this policy.

## 41. Monitoring and review of the policy

41.1. This policy will be reviewed every five years, or sooner if required by statutory, regulatory, best practice, emerging developments, or circumstances arising from reviews of other Council-wide policies.

41.2. Arrangement for a full internal audit of the Repairs process to be undertaken by the Council's Internal Auditors. The full scope of the audit will be agreed upon with the Internal Auditors, Director of Asset and Repairs, and Heads of Service.

## 42. Document Control

42.1. This is a controlled document and should not be changed unless by authorisation of the policy owner.

<b>Monitoring</b>	
Approved Date:	19 November 2024
Next Review Date:	1 April 2029
Effective date:	20 November 2024
<b>Consultation Review</b>	
Stakeholders review:	31.10.2024
Legal review date:	11.11.2024
Residents reading group:	11.11.2024
Policy owner:	Director of Assets and Repairs
Ratified by:	Housing DMT on 19 November 2024

Equality impact assessment:	The impact of this policy will be measured as it is implemented and used as part of a scheduled 1-year implementation compliance review.	
Version Updates		
Version Number	Summary of change	Author and Approver
1.0	New Policy	Developed and reviewed with subject matter experts in Housing and Residents Reading Group