



Benhill Gas Main Replacement

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are these works being carried out?

The project was originally proposed in 2005, because tenants and leaseholders who were members of the Housing Forum (a tenant, leaseholder committee of the Council) requested that all residents who paid for their gas through a heating charge be provided with their own private gas meter. This request, along with the transfer of the private gas network to a Gas Transporter was supported by the Council's Housing Forum.

A consultant was appointed to assess the options available as it had implications for 5 estates across the Borough.

Around this time the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) also advised that the council should carefully consider the risks associated with continuing to maintain private gas networks and how maintenance and renewal should be planned for the future. By upgrading the network for adoption by a Registered Gas Transporter, the Council would no longer be responsible for the cost and risks of maintaining the network and in addition, residents would be able to have their own meters fitted and be able to buy gas from the open market.

When will the work begin?

Murphy will set up their site compound in early November 2009 at the rear of Stancliffe House

Underground works will begin from mid November 2009

The installation of individual gas meters will begin from February 2010

Murphy's Resident Liaison Officer will arrange appointments with residents to provide further information as to be your meter will be fitted.

All works will aim to be concluded by early Autumn 2010.

Where will the new gas meter be installed?

The vast majority of meters will be installed externally and housed in a lockable meter box. As works progress, Murphy's Resident Liaison Officer will advise where the gas meter will be positioned. We will review any elements for disabled access in relation to the positioning of meters.

Will residents be compensated for their loss of gas during the installation period?

Sutton Housing Partnership will not be providing compensation for the loss of gas whilst your meter is being installed. However, Murphy will provide hot plates for cooking and heaters if required. The programming of the works has made provision for the most disruptive elements to the upper flats to be done during the summer months

Who will own the new pipe work?

The new pipe work will be owned and maintained by Fulcrum Pipelines, The Ofgem registered licensed Gas Transporter.

Pipe work positions

All gas pipe work positions are governed by current legislation and it is an offence to fix pipe work in positions which contravene regulations. Pipe work cannot be concealed due to the possibility that gas could be trapped if there were to be a leak which went unnoticed. This would give risk to possible explosion. Whilst it might be physically possible to re-route some pipe work so that it was not visible we are also restrained by the amount of public money we have to do the work and we must consider those residents who, by virtue of their lease have to contribute financially. Due to the construction of most blocks, pipe work will be fixed in a similar configuration as the existing pipe layouts.

Who will supply my gas once my meter has been installed?

Legislation dictates that for a period of 28 days you will be supplied by a default supplier (yet to be confirmed). After this period you can choose to remain with the default supplier or alternatively you can purchase your gas from another supplier including the option of dual fuel purchases. Sutton Housing Partnership will provide further details and guidance about this during the default period.

Can prepayment meters be installed?

Murphy is not able to install prepayment meters as part of this project. However, after the default supplier period you can contact your chosen supplier to enquire whether a prepayment meter can be installed. Although Sutton Housing Partnership cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

Mess and inconvenience due to the work

Sutton Housing Partnership will work closely with Murphy and the Steering Group to keep disruption and mess to a minimum whilst these works are taking place.

Service charges & rent

Once your meter has been installed and the gas supply switched over you will no longer be charged for your gas in your rent or service charge.

It is important to remember that although the amount of rent or service charge you have to pay will have been reduced; you will need to budget and set aside this money to pay for your gas usage when your bill arrives.

Charges & payments for leaseholders

Payment options and timescales can be discussed with our leasehold services team on 0800 195 5552.

Payment options will be sent to all leaseholders when invoices are produced.