

## APPCOG Stakeholder Forum – Minutes

### Thursday 4 March 2021

**10:00 – 12:30 | Teleconference**

**Chair: Chris Bielby, *Chair of the Gas Safety Trust***

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#### **Attendees**

Chris Bielby, GISG (CB) – Chair  
Adrian McConnell, Gas Safety Trust (AMc)  
Alan Young, HETAS (AY)  
Avril Samuel, KHMT (AV)  
Baroness Finlay of Llandaff, House of Lords, (IF)  
Chris Yates, CORGI (CY)  
Claire O’Meara, Fire Angle (CM)  
Dan Edwards, SGN (DE)  
David Goodall, Steve Vick International (DG)  
David Knipe, OFTEC (DK)  
Emma Fraser, LFB (EF)  
Frank Brehany, Independent Travel Consumer Campaigner (FB)  
Gordon Samuel, KHMT (GS)  
Gaia Alexander, LFB (GA)  
Hayley Tranter, Cadent (HT)  
Hilary Bath, Think CO (HB)  
Ian McCluskey, IGEM (IMc)  
Isabella Myers, COMed (IMy)  
John O’Grady, (JO)  
Jonathan Kane, CO-Gas Safety (JK)  
Laura Fatah, Policy Connect (LF)  
Maureen Nolan, Gas Safe Charity (MN)  
Dr Nichola Ashby, RCN (NA)  
Oona Muirhead, Policy Connect (OM)  
Sir Peter Bottomley, House of Commons (PB)  
Phil Cleaver, Chimney Skills Training (PC)  
Dr Plamena Stroh, UCL (PS)  
Richard Harper, Energy and Utility Skills (RH)  
Rob Lyon, CoGDEM (RL)  
Sally Thomas, Wales & West Utilities (STh)  
Scott Darroch, Gas Safe Register (SDh)  
Simon Main, Think CO/Gas Safe Charity (SM)  
Dr Sophie Duggan, Airesafe.London (SDg)  
Stephanie Trotter, CO-Gas Safety (ST)  
Steve Dacre, NGN (SDc)  
Stine Holm, Office of Liz Twist MP, (SH)  
Thomas Bradley, Cadent (TB)  
Trevor Hendes, NACE (TH)  
Trevor Smallpiece, TS Enterprises (TS)

#### **Apologies**

Barry Sheerman MP, Parliamentary Co-Chair  
Liz Twist MP, Parliamentary Officer  
Andy Speake, AICO  
Wilma Brooks, Coal Merchants Federation (Great Britain) Ltd & Solid Fuel Association Ltd  
Elizabeth Warwick, Wales & West Utilities  
Sally Thomas, Wales & West Utilities  
Susan Johnson, Steve Vick International  
Prof Rob Chilcott, University of Hertfordshire  
Trevor Hendes, NACE  
Rebecca Scarlett, CO Survivor  
Jilly Robson, London Fire Brigade  
Paul Overton, CO-Gas Safety  
Howard Cane, NACE

## 1. Welcome by the Chair, introductions and apologies

CB welcomed members and received apologies. Particular thanks were given to Dr Nichola Ashby, the Head of Professional Learning and Development for the RCN who will deliver a guest presentation on the CO specific learning, created by Think CO and funded by the Gas Safe Charity, that the RCN have incorporated into their Learning Management System. CB also welcomed newcomer John O'Grady who will provide media expertise, and David Goodall, who is the newly appointed chair of the Sci-Tech group.

## 2. Matters Arising

1. **Policy Connect** to send out Gas Safety videos to members, including those made by Katie Haines Memorial Trust (KHMT).  
**Done**
2. **Policy Connect** to arrange a SciTech handover meeting with Chris Bielby and David Goodall.  
**Done**
3. **Policy Connect** to forward details for Jilly Robson and Pat Meehan to KHMT, regarding provision of free CO Alarms for Fire service.  
**Done and engagement has gone forward**
4. **Fire Safety Bill, Baroness Finlay**  
**Done** CO amendments were tabled with support from GST but not taken forward. OM suggests that the [Draft Building Safety Bill](#) may present opportunities  
**Action ongoing:** LF to monitor legislative developments and seek opportunities for policy development
5. **KHMT** to send eBay contact details for complaints and any other available information regarding black spot detectors to secretariat.  
**Done** details received from KHMT, letter to eBay now sent from 5 APPCOG Parliamentary Officers.  
**Action ongoing** – LF will keep stakeholders updated re eBay response
6. **Policy Connect** to arrange meetings to further explore the issues discussed regarding appliance installation, testing for CO, and patient pathways.  
**Rolling action** – next event is **Data Workshop on 1 April 9:30am**
7. **Boat Safety Scheme** (Graham Watts): Two tragic CO deaths on 03/12/2019: The investigation bulletin has come out but still waiting for the full outcome.  
**Ongoing**
8. **Policy Connect** to seek input re working group from COMed and Comms group members to raise awareness of PSR  
**Ongoing** – **LF to produce proposal for group objectives**, GDNs may wish to engage re drive for single point of registration for PSR.
9. **Patrick Meehan, National Fire Chiefs Council:** Cumbria trial where a CO reading was taken at every CO incident. Was the trial taken forward to the Committees of NFCC?

**Update:** attendees inform LF that PM is no longer in post

**Action:** LF to seek info re the new NFCC lead from Rick Hylton

**Action:** LF and GA to follow up with Claire O'Meara re contacts at Cumbria Fire [done]

### 3. APPCOG Secretariat Update

LF gave some highlights from the secretariat update; please find full written update attached.

### 4. APPCOG Working Groups Update

#### a. Comms Group, Rob Lyon

The first comms group meeting was held last week, some key points discussed included the awareness weeks for CO and Gas Safety Week (GSW), the extension of the CO alarms regulations, and a summer campaign on short-term lets.

This year's CO Awareness Week (COAW) gained over a million impressions on social media (twitter). Stakeholder engagement was successful; holding preparatory meetings just prior to the COAW was helped to align the message and unify all those involved. Asset creation was a new thing for us this year, an online 'asset pack' was made available for free. This included shared imagery and resources to help individuals and groups amplify the campaign. The asset pack was downloaded over 100 times, providing a strong and engaged public base to build from in 2021. Both campaigns taught us the impact that groups can have when core messages are shared effectively, and the public reach far exceeded that gained in 2019. For 2021 we plan to go bigger and better, goal setting and messaging is going to start even earlier so we will be well ahead of the game. We are hoping for a parliamentary launch for COAW in 2021.

Another focus for the Comms group will be the extension of the CO alarms regulations, when the MHCLG consultation outcome on landlord's duties is given. This legal development should increase awareness that home owners offering Short term lets, such as those leased via air BnB, are considered landlords and have a legal duty to provide CO alarms. Comms members from the Safer Tourism Foundation will be key allies, as will the National Landlords Association. The anticipated 'staycation' effect of COVID means that this may be most effective over the summer.

OM: APPCOG parliamentary Co-Chairs have responded to the consultation from MHCLG and suggested that APPCOG could assist with a public information campaign to accompany the extension of the regulations, we will keep members updated on this.

**Action:** LF to include John O'Grady in Comms group going forward

#### b. COMed Group, Issie Myers

IM provided an overview of COMed project work. At the recent meeting COMed on 18 February, attendees received an excellent presentation from Prof Abramov and Dr Stroh from UCL on their GST

funded work on the effects of O<sub>2</sub> delivery on hypoxic brain cells, which led to an engaging discussion on the opportunities for oxygen treatment of CO poisoning. GST have agreed further funding to support this important work and ensure results can be developed.

COMed member updates:

- Good news on pregnancy, work is going ahead in Manchester with HW
- Bob Flanagan has new information about CO incidents and near misses as reported in the press at a European level which will be taken forward with PHE
- Two lab based studies can now progress, CO exposure on embryo development in chicken eggs
- Robert Dickinson is due to start looking at changes observed in the brains of rats due to CO exposure, again GST funded. Before analysing brain samples, RD had observed the behavioural difference that CO exposure had caused in the rats, such in their gait and memory function. The project is now in the final stage, so we look forward to results.
- MH and IM et al have been granted funding by GST to look at pupilo-metry as a biomarker in relation to low level CO poisoning. MRI and [Transcranial Doppler](#) imaging will be used for further analysis. This method has not been used before in this field, so it is a very exciting project.

CO effect on the cardio vascular system, there is a seminar next Wednesday, 10 March 2021. We are looking at how people with existing cardio vascular diseases might be additionally compromised due to low level exposure on the home.

PSR will be a future area of work, also looking at patient pathways and how this impacts compromised patients. Expansion of e-learning will be taken forward, we look forward to hearing from Dr Ashby on this today.

### **c. CO+ SciTech Group, David Goodall**

CB, DG, OM and LF met recently to agree a strategy for this group. CB thanked OM for revising the Terms of Reference, which provided a basis for CB and AMc to reach out for new group members. This had led to (at time of the meeting) three new requests to join the group.

DG has taken on the role of Chair, the next step will be to send out a questionnaire to new and existing members to establish what will work best for the group. Once this has been done, we are hopeful of setting up a meeting swiftly.

## **5. Presentation from Dr Nichola Ashby**

Dr Ashby thanked the group for inviting her to speak, and congratulated members on the significant progress made over the last two years since her time as a COMed member. Dr Ashby will present on the carbon monoxide e-learning program 'Think CO', originally developed with funding from the Gas Safe Charity, which the RCN has recently incorporated into their online learning for all members and website visitors.

The RCN is the largest professional body and trade union in the UK, with almost 500,000 members across voluntary, health and social care sectors, from 16-year olds to post-retirement nurses. The project aims were

to increase CO Awareness across the whole workforce, to identify health risks in patient groups and also to raise awareness amongst workers who are going in and out of people's homes.

To be sustainable, the final learning product needed to be available for free, not require frequent updates, and the RCN wanted to see the impact this had on healthcare. After seeking feedback from members on the accessibility, usability and applicability of different platforms, it was decided that the Think CO e-learning program would be taken forward.

The Gas Safe Charity e-learning 'Think CO' went online as a free to use resource which people can log into and return back to. NA explained that bite sized rapid learning is what works well, statements of principles, small podcasts no longer than 15minutes. Members do not have time to sit and undertake extensive training programs. The RCN provides rapid fire learning, accessible via phone on a 'three clicks' basis; giving members easy access to info and resources that work for their needs.

Ideally, the RCN would like to see this program being embedded across the approved education providers so it becomes a part of the standard training offered. An education strategy is about to be launched, which will explore how to apply academics credits to learning modules such as this and stimulate higher levels of engagement.

Dr Ashby commented on the challenges that the pandemic has presented, which has meant that the intended face to face events have had to be put on hold. There can be some confusion between COVID-19 symptoms and CO poisoning, it can be hard for health care professionals to clarify the difference, and a specific comms plan is required to increase uptake and awareness as COVID-19 may be the first thing that comes to mind.

However, although this has been a purely digital campaign there has been reasonable internet traffic, members have been redirected to the Think CO modules from other areas in e-learning.

CB thanked NA for this excellent presentation, and opened the floor for comments and questions:

SM from Think CO/Gas Safe Charity (who developed the RCN e-learning modules) has just come from delivering a workshop for health and social care professionals this morning. One significant difference to share re CO and COVID-19 is not having a high temperature in CO poisoning.

GS: KHMT funded a poster designed by Dr Ed Walker for Emergency Departments, highlighting the symptoms of CO poisoning and how to identify it in patients. Would such a poster be useful in nursing stations and other frontline settings? GS and KHMT would be happy to fund this, and highlight that they have made about 5 videos which last approximately 2mins each, these could be used to provide context for learning programs. The offer was gratefully received.

ST: asked NA about the algorithm that DH has for GPs to identify the CO poisoning, and raises her concerns that this is incomplete as it does not take into account data about CO presence in the home. CO testing on individuals can often give dangerous false negative results. ST also offered case studies from the CO-Gas Safe Charity for use by NA. NA thanked ST and was open to further discussion on this.

SDc: would like to know if RCN can test the knowledge before and after the nurses and other healthcare professionals had used the e-learning? If so, this would provide a useful comparator to align with public awareness. RCN does look at pre and post knowledge, there will also be a significant evaluation of the learning program once it has had enough time to be absorbed.

NA also commented that she supports 'trigger system' for cases of CO exposure, where those who have been exposed could be flagged and easily referred into the healthcare system, and would welcome the opportunity to explore this idea with gas engineers and others involved in appliance maintenance.

IM COMed are very supportive of the patient pathways/trigger system initiative and have been contemplating ways to take this forward, taking into account gas engineers and others who may be able to report. This is on the agenda for COMed and we do acknowledge there is a problem here. It would be good to include NA in those conversations going forward. Julie Connolly may be able to provide some useful case studies and insights on her PhD in terms of patient experience and HCPs.

SM also shared with members that online interactive workshops of an hour in length are available via Think CO and have been taken up well. One of the questions they ask in the workshop is around CO and risk assessments, about 60 – 70 organisations have offered to engage in more detailed analysis with Think CO to show what changes they have made as a result of the training. SM shared that some Safe and Well teams (who are part of fire and rescue) have changed their practices after doing the Think CO training and now check for CO alarms in the homes of those they visit.

**Action:** NA has shared her email address with attendees, GS and AS will follow up on this action to develop a CO poster for use with nurses, GPs and other frontline healthcare workers. SDc may also follow up re awareness and impact gauging, and others as appropriate.

## 7. Update from APPCOG members and stakeholders

### a. Frank Brehany, Independent Travel Consumer Campaigner

In terms of travel, it is the comms challenges that lie ahead. In particular, over summer there is likely to be an increase in people who are first time 'staycationing', if there is structured messaging that seems the best place for it to be focussed upon, in relation to the specific CO dangers posed by BBQs and LPG. The scale of holidays abroad will be largely unknown until June I think. FB notes that there is likely to be an increase in first time Air BnB owners too, who will need to be aware of their duty to provide CO alarms to those residing in their property.

OM reminds the group that there is an APPCOG report on this ready to be launched, it was put on hold over lockdown so as to get maximum impact from publication at the point when people are beginning to consider holidays this summer. The extended MHCLG alarm regulations will also be a key date to consider in the planning of an awareness campaign.

### b. Gas Safe Register, SD

The winter branding campaign for GSR is currently running and has been since November. The work around the Ripple effect film fed into that, talking about the importance of servicing and more general information on recognising CO symptoms and the importance of using an audible alarm.

GSR is currently bringing ideas together for a spring campaign, with a view to explore how to create an analogue to the opposite of the “Switch On” season (in September) for spring which is essentially a “Switch off” season. Messaging may include encouraging consumer to think about getting prepared in the down season, and also holiday safety.

GSR try to make Gas Safety Week (GSW) as inclusive as possible, and welcome others to get involved with the awareness event. GSW 2021 will be 13 – 19 of September. GSR are currently in the planning and prepping phase for this, SD will be reaching out to this group and others for input regarding particular themes or areas of focus that members feel would be of value this year. It is hoped that GSW can evolve this year as it is well established enough to have a strong base to work from. It is currently perhaps unlikely that face to face events will be permitted, so perhaps it is advisable to focus on developing more digital outreach, as we did successfully this year. For those wanting to see the report on the 2020 Gas Safety Week you can access it here: <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/media/3216/gas-safety-week-report-2020.pdf>

**c. Federation of British Chimney Sweeps (BFCS), PC**

CS Certificates are now digital, so PC has been able to access almost 5k certs which a registered sweep will leave at every property they visit. These include information about a CO Alarm check, a sweep will check the battery, placement and expiry date of alarms when they visit homes. From Oct 2020 to Jan 2021 they obtained statistics taken from 4,835 chimney sweep certificates. PC anticipates that going forward data will be harvested in this way every quarter and published annually.

- Overall, 33% of homes with solid fuel appliances or open fires do not have a working CO alarm in the room
- Of the 66% of those with CO alarms, 17.5% were issued with advisory notices, which are likely to be related to issues of alarm positioning
- Sweeps also identify the type of appliance, Defra is promoting a new stove type that has lower emissions

Numbers without CO alarms by appliance type:

DEFRA Stoves	Stoves	Open fires
13.2%	26.5%	60.75%

The BFCS have been promoting smart alarms, where CO data can be downloaded but so far there has small response to this initiative so it has been impossible to draw any conclusions from this as yet. Amongst home

visitors, there is a huge potential for the role of the chimney sweep to be developed in terms of CO Safety and public education.

PC states that solid fuel appliances represent approximately 50% of CO fatalities across the UK, which is disproportionate when considering how many homes have gas, and how many homes use solid fuel. It is also worth noting that solid fuel is capable of producing much more CO than a gas installation. CB thanks PC for this useful information.

**Action:** LF to pick up with PC re data shared and potential opportunities to engage sweeps in a home visitor role

#### **d. IGEM, IMc**

IGEM has recently published two standards, in January the IGEM G11 'Unsafe Situation Procedures' and this month the 'Standards of training and gas work' that all registered training providers have to follow. Both are available to [download free from IGEM website](#), and the 'Unsafe Situation Procedures' (or 'Unsafe Sits') are also available from the Gas Safe Register's website. The 'Unsafe Situation Procedures' are being launched with an app on Android and Apple as well to provide engineers with a tool when they are out in the field.

In June 2021 IGEM are holding a Gas Safety Conference which GISG are supporting, this will include a dedicated strand for CO research. The conference will showcase some of the gas industry safety award winners who will share their safety case studies and initiatives.

Gas Quality update: IGEM have been working on a new standard for gas quality in the UK for 5 years now, the comment phase is complete and the standard is now with HSE who are reviewing the safety case material. The intention is that HSE will carry out an impact assessment regarding changing the standard.

**Action:** LF to circulate info re the IGEM conference: **9 June 2021**, 9am – 4pm: [IGEM Safety Conference- June-21 - IGEM](#) [done]

#### **e. CO-Gas Safety, ST**

CO Gas Safety marked its 26 year anniversary on 25 January. A report and press release has been published to announce some generous donations received by the charity, including an anonymous donation of £100,000 in December 2020, £2,150 from the Guild of Master Sweeps, £22,134 from npower and a £20,000 pledge from Kane International Ltd. The charity is now considering productive ways to use the donations, and hopes to resume filming activity soon.

CO-Gas Safety continues to press for the implementation of the HSE recommendations from 2000; that the Gas Emergency Service should record CO levels, testing appliances once they have been turned back on after a suspected CO incident. It is noted that neither HSE nor Ofgem have consulted on this issue, despite a memorandum of understanding to do so. ST has requested meeting with HSE and Mimms

Davis to discuss these matters but has not had a response. ST requests APPCOG to consider approaching the minister.

CO-Gas Safety is working with GDNs including Cadent and NGN. In a recent project, the awareness raising Safety Seymour campaign has been taken to Jersey, as this is outside the UK there are particular hurdles to extending projects in this area.

ST reminds the group of the similarity between symptoms of COVID-19 and CO poisoning. It is critical that testing for CO is done for home appliances and atmospheres to correctly identify whether symptoms may be caused by exposure to CO. CO-Gas Safety support legislative changes, for the landlords gas safety check to include mandatory testing for CO and for alarms to be mandatory in all properties. Most registered gas engineers do test for CO, but it is not mandatory.

ST supports the APPCOG's response to the MHCLG consultation, it is disappointing that gas cookers were excluded from this. ST references the issues with the reliability of data on CO fatalities and injuries, which is likely to be just the tip of the iceberg. A lack of accessible records on CO exposure also negatively impacts survivors, who often struggle to evidence their experience and access appropriate treatment.

ST referenced a GST funded study which was announced in 2015; where the FRS were to collect data from 'data loggers' in 75,000 homes, but sadly this did not happen. AMc updated the group that this was a study in collaboration with Liverpool John Moores University, it could not proceed as initially planned due to changes in the way in which the FRS were funded; meaning that they were prevented from taking part in activities that are deemed to be 'additional' to their duties. GST funded the academic data analysis and reporting part of the study, data was sought from other sources but this was more limited than hoped. A final draft of the report it anticipated soon.

**Action:** LF to connect with a couple from a camping exposure who may be suitable participants for St George's clinic trial.

**Action:** all members to refer any independent gas experts to ST/pass on ST contact details to gas experts

#### f. GST

AMc: GST had sponsored APPCOG to host the CO Data Workshop as previously discussed (see Secretariat update for details) which Baroness Finlay will kindly chair on **1 April at 9:30am**. A 'Save the Date' reminder will be sent out shortly.

CO and CV Workshop hosted by British Toxicological Society (BST) will be held on 10 March. Other upcoming research has mainly been covered in the COMed update.

GSTs main update is that they will be re-branding in early June and changing their name to the CO Research Trust, Baroness Finlay will become the new Chair of the Trust, as CB will become a trustee after 10 years at the helm. A new strategy includes seven priorities:

1. Improve diagnosis, e.g. identify new novel bio markers, so treatment can be received where needed and build up our tools so that eventually we can identify every exposure

2. Improve treatment and therapeutics
3. Identifying the needs and specific risks of vulnerable groups and comorbidities, looking at health outcomes, older people, cardio vascular health and pregnancy
4. Work to quantify the prevalence of exposure and improve the data on CO
5. Built environment and energy efficiency measures, looking towards the Building regulations
6. Zero carbon agenda & working with industry colleagues
7. Better CO detection and risk reduction supported by new and novel technologies

Two grants calls:

- Small (up 10k) short or noel pilot projects: 8 June – 14 July
- Main Grants call: 19 July – 20 October

In further update, AMc informs the group of a situation in North Wales, where six school kitchens are in danger of being closed down due to being in a poor state of repair. Currently the kitchens can only be used when all the windows and doors are open. The council will vote on what to do today, installing induction cookers will be considered as an option. GST have written a letter, including research evidence, encouraging the council to address the problem at source, rather than going for a quick fix.

**Action:** LF to send 'Save the Date' for the CO Data Workshop 1 April to all stakeholders [done]

**Action:** LF circulate info re the CV event 10 March [done]

**Action:** AMc to update the group re the school kitchen situation

**g. London Fire Brigade, EF & GA**

The CO & residential boat project funded by GST has been paused; as the FRS cannot go into homes at the moment, and are not able to carry out home fire safety visits. It is hoped that the CO & residential boat project will be run across 16 boroughs. Data loggers need to collect 12 continuous months' worth of data for the research, to account for seasonal changes and report on the full picture. The project is on hold but everything is prepped and ready to go: there are training videos for staff, and a whole new set of guidance for FRS crews has been produced, specific to the fire, CO and water risks related to residential boats. A new booklet is currently being distributed, the Port of London Authority have shared this on their website to residential boat users.

Going forward there will be wider training for all crews; 5,000 members of staff will watch a training video on specific risks related to fire, CO and water on residential boats. It is acknowledged that CO awareness in FRS crews does need to be improved; EF asked members to understand that there is huge pressure of FRS at the moment and staff are being redeployed in many areas. LFB will have approx. £65million budget cut in the next few years, so it is essential that work undertaken is as effective and targeted as possible. Carbon Monoxide now sits under the Health Team within Community Safety, which has done a lot of outreach with vulnerable people and communities during the pandemic.

GA provided a further update on specific LFB CO work: GA and JR (Jilly Robson) are now the CO contacts for LFB going forward. AS and GS (of KHMT) spoke with JR following the last meeting and worked with

the LFB Comms Team to create an extremely powerful video for CO Awareness week, GA thanked KHMT for this effective collaboration, enabled via APPCOG. LFB Comms Team have also created a short snappy video on CO risk and exposure prevention, which was also launched for COAW 2020. A new website is coming soon with more information on CO, LFB used the asset pack from COAW to enrich and update their resources. GA also interested in Cumbria FRS project.

**Action:** LF to engage CC re Cumbria contact (as offered) and share with GA [done]

#### **h. Northern Gas Networks (NGN) – SDc**

NGN have been looking at tackling the issue of CO from a different angle, and are seeking to enhance data driven decision making across all areas. A prototype of a vulnerability mapping tool is being developed, this will allow NGN to identify hot spots of CO related reports and determine what the specific needs are (e.g. awareness, communication, training, poverty etc.). Some of this data is open source, to build the richest possible picture of what is happening in communities; food bank usage, the decisions individuals are having to make between paying for food or heating, and the ways things are progressing through the pandemic for consumers.

NGN are looking towards technological solutions for CO detection. An innovative piece of tech is in development, this has the potential to identify CO reading in the blood of a wearer. SDc can update the group when further details are made public, approx. mid-May.

Research has been conducted to test the knowledge and understanding of both CO and the PSR amongst all age ranges. In the 18 – 24 range, about 7% said they would sit and do nothing if their CO alarm went off. This clearly shows that more education is needed.

The Lake District Foundation have a reach of 20 million visitors each year, NGN are working with them to raise awareness in the anticipated upcoming 'staycation' period. This includes those in cabins, campervans, on boats, with BBQs and hiking parties.

Community Action Northumberland have 200 properties that are off gas and off electric, traditionally small farming communities that are using diesel generators and solid fuel, NGN wanted to know how to reach those people. Although these communities are not their gas consumers per se, there is a social and moral responsibility to them. SDc shared that there are approx. 2k over the UK that are off grid.

Supplier and shipper representation in APPCOG would be good, they own the gas that GDNs transport and have direct contact with consumers.

**Action:** LF to reach out to Abbey Sampson (known by JS and OM) for gas supplier contacts, also to seek representation from manufacturers to increase APPCOG reach and diversity.

#### **i. HETAS, AY**

HETAS has created three CO awareness videos specifically for solid fuel users which were uploaded last year. These include information on the correct placement of CO alarms, signs and symptoms of CO exposure, and risks; for both consumers and installers. AY supports PC's points regarding the educational role that home visitors, including sweeps, can have in informing the public of CO risks.

HETAS reach out to emergency responders to ask for referrals to be made if there is an issue with SF so they can offer some guidance to the consumer, consumers can use solid fuel in various ways so individual advice is key to ensure safety. AY notes the lack of official pathways in reporting CO incidents, as mentioned a few times in this meeting; this has led HETAS to forge their own connections with emergency responders.

The BSS have collaborated with HETAS for some time; HETAS also help to chair the Recreation Craft Committee which covers technical installation practice in boats. Installation then feeds back into correct use and CO awareness. HETAS have produced a booklet of 'glamping guidance' with the Glamping Association for safe use of wood burning appliances – yurts, luxury tents, caravans etc.

Over lockdown the HETAS website has seen an increase in traffic, information about installing solid fuel appliances in the home has been popular as more people are doing up their houses. Link to information regarding solid fuel/Carbon Monoxide; [www.hetas.co.uk/consumer/carbon-monoxide/](http://www.hetas.co.uk/consumer/carbon-monoxide/)

**j. KHMT, GS**

RoSPA Scotland and the Scottish Government put together a series of safety webinars for COAW, GS was featured as one of the two CO speakers. [The powerful short film 'She' which documents Katie's life](#), put together by RL, was shown and extremely well received. The KHMT newsletter for COAW solely contained facts taken from the asset pack from RL. Subscribe to the newsletter [here](#).

KHMT submitted a response to the MHCLG consultation on extending CO alarm regulations in January, outlining their concerns about gas cookers being omitted.

In an extension of the work to distribute 40 alarms to 40 fire stations, GS and AS have been donating 40 alarms via foodbanks with information brochures. KHMT thanks the manufacturers for donating and subsidising the cost of alarms so they could undertake this project.

The virtual London Marathon has three runners for KHMT in on 3 October 2021. Sponsorship pages will be set up shortly. KHMT have been offered five possible places in the Vitality Virtual London 10km Ballot. So far two runners have signed up, KHMT encourages others to get in touch if they would like to run as there are three places left.

KHMT are seeking to produce another film, ideally over summer, and are looking for script writers and collaboration. AS is in touch with a PR agency.

On 18 Feb 2021, which is Katie's Death Anniversary; AS put a post on Linked In which has received over 15k views. Stakeholders are asked to note that this platform can be used as a powerful tool to get the message out.

KHMT supports the expansion of protocols for the Gas Safe Certificate, particularly to include servicing as a requirement. GS feels that currently the GSC is insufficient, this should be nearer to an MOT and the boiler should be serviced before a certificate is given.

AS is in contact with a young Scottish man who had CO exposure, he requested an MRI scan which evidenced CO poisoning from his rented accommodation. However, there is now a dispute as the landlord said they had been given a certificate, or that someone came to the house to inspect but was refused entry. In reality it can be difficult to enforce one's rights as a tenant. If protocols were tighter, breaches would be clearer to identify, and tenants' rights could be more easily enforced.

**Action:** all members to refer script writers and those who may be interested in supporting a new film to KHMT.

**Action:** all members to refer potential runners for the virtual 10k to GS and AS

#### k. **John O'Grady**

A former cricketer David Lloyd (aka 'Bumble') owns a cabin cruiser based in York Marina. There may be a potential from some safety messaging involving him as a user of the waterways.

**Action:** LF to follow up with JO and RL on this suggestion (also to include GW)

## 8. AOB

None

## 9. Chair's closing remarks

CB thanked members for their contributions and attendance, and closed the meeting. CB reminded members that their attendance at upcoming CO events was most valuable, and congratulated stakeholders on the range of excellent projects that are being undertaken.

## 10. Close of Meeting