



HETAS Chimney Sweeping Code

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HETAS Approved Chimney Sweeps are required to meet or exceed this code. All have undertaken training and assessment to meet criteria set by HETAS, working for consumer safety and the wider public interest in safe, efficient and environmentally responsible use of solid fuel, wood and biomass.

Training and Assessment

To be considered for award of the core HETAS Approved Chimney Sweeping competence, applicants must:

- Have passed suitable chimney sweep training and assessment, through one or more of:
 - » HETAS-recognised sweeping organisations.
 - » Chimney Sweeping NVQ Level 2 or equivalent nationally-recognised training
 - » Experienced Worker Route (i.e Portfolio of evidence).
- Hold a HETAS H009 qualification (or higher) within the last 5 years.
- Have been observed and inspected on site for safe and thorough sweeping, and for appropriate operational and environmental advice to the user.
- Be committed to continual professional development (CPD).

Extension of scope – sweeps who have the core sweeping accreditation may also apply for one or more additional competences which HETAS can award:

- i. Power Sweeping - needs evidence of specific training in mechanised sweeping.
- ii. Camera Surveys - evidence of specific training.
- iii. Sweeping of Biomass Facilities – HETAS biomass training (H005DE) assessment, or evidence of appropriate training in commercial/industrial biomass system preventative maintenance.

Sweeping Visit Requirements

1. A HETAS Approved Chimney Sweep shall advise their customer/user on:
 - a. Frequency and type of sweeping appropriate to the installation, fuel choice and pattern of use.
 - b. How safety depends on correct use of the appliance, regular servicing and maintenance.
 - c. The requirement to use the correct type of fuel, of the specified quality.
 - d. The environmental benefits of correct fuel choice and responsible use of their appliance(s).
2. Chimney sweeping either by use of manual or mechanised sweeping methods, must include:
 - a. Risk assessment of all activities on the sweeping visit.
 - b. Determining any obstructions and/or restrictions in the flue.
 - c. Passing suitably sized brush(es) and/or attachment(s) for the type and diameter of each chimney or flue system in use, throughout its complete length.
 - d. Thoroughly removing products of combustion, such that there are no loose or obstructing items in the flue and a repeat sweep by a skilled sweep would not produce additional debris.
 - e. Protecting rooms and occupants against damage from soot or other debris, and removing all traces from the property.
 - f. Checking that the chimney or flue provides adequate draw for the products of combustion to the top of the flue.
3. A Chimney Sweep shall ensure all sweeping brushes, attachments, rods and any other ancillary equipment are in good condition and able to accommodate the type, height and size requirements of the chimney or flue system in use without risk of damage to the existing flue or chimney lining or structure. Equipment must be sufficient for the common chimney height for that area and type(s) of building, and the sweep should carry additional rods to ensure that they can cope with an exceptionally tall chimney in their area or a breakage in one or two of their rods.
4. A Chimney Sweep shall ensure, before starting each sweep, that:
 - a. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used at all times.
 - b. Any person(s) within the vicinity of the works being carried out are suitably protected.
 - c. The area of work is suitably protected, ensuring any furnishings and floor area remain clean and unaffected by the works undertaken.

5. A method of sweeping must be selected which can be completed without damage to the chimney, liner or flue system. If a cowl or other flue termination is dislodged, the sweep must reattach or ensure that arrangements are in place for it to be replaced before the flue is next used.
6. Any debris trap attached to the flue should be emptied of all material.
7. A Chimney Sweep shall ensure that all soot and waste is collected using professional cleaning equipment, disposed of appropriately and transported with Local Authority permissions where applicable (such as a waste carriage licence for any polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH)). When considering asbestos, which is frequently seen in the form of closure plates/flue/cowls; sweeps are advised not to touch and advise the customer to contact an asbestos specialist company.
8. Vacuum-only or chemical-only methods of cleaning a chimney or flue system are not deemed acceptable practice within this code. They cannot be relied on to clear materials such as mortar, loose bricks or bird's nests etc which may be blocking a flue. Some chemical cleaners can also corrode metal in the chimney and appliance.
9. A Chimney Sweep shall ensure each chimney/flue is tested for performance and compliance. For England and Wales, the Building Regulations requirements (also stated in Approved Document J) include:
 - a. J1 Air Supply – *check that adequate ventilation is present.*
 - b. J2 Discharge of products of combustion – *appropriate smoke testing is undertaken, to include smoke draw (Smoke Test 2) in all cases. Depending on the pattern of use and any issues raised by the user, it may also be appropriate to carry out a pressure test (Smoke Test 1), flue draught test, spillage test (for appliances which are to be refuelled when hot) and/or draught interference test (where fans or ventilation may affect flue performance and safety).*
10. A Chimney Sweep shall also check the solid fuel installation against Building Regulations requirements applicable to that property, which for England and Wales include:
 - a. J3 Warning of release of carbon monoxide – *a carbon monoxide alarm is fixed as per HETAS Technical Note HTN_0022.*
 - b. J4 Protection of building – *confirm that there is no evidence of risk of heat damage or ignition to combustible material, caused by heat from use of appliance and flue.*
 - c. J5 Provision of information – *a notice plate is present.*
11. For any visit which involves sweeping of a solid fuel chimney or flue, a HETAS Approved Chimney Sweep must complete an appropriate certificate of sweeping meeting the requirements of this code. Any faults or concerns must be recorded. These must be left with the end user or customer.
12. A Chimney Sweep shall ensure that any identified concerns relating to the chimney or flue system or installation are assessed and documented following the HETAS Unsafe Situations Procedure (HUSP). A copy is to be left with the end user or responsible person, to include issuing any associated HETAS warning label(s) if applicable

Technician Status

HETAS encourages chimney sweeps to work towards HETAS Approved Servicing Technician accreditation. Servicing technicians are accredited to do full life-cycle servicing and preventative maintenance on solid fuel installations and appliances, and to issue safety certificates to landlords/owners/occupiers. A combined servicing and sweeping visit can be offered by HETAS Approved Chimney Sweeps who are also registered as HETAS Approved Servicing Technicians (or HETAS Registered Installers) for the relevant category of appliance(s).

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