



VOID MANAGEMENT POLICY

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The Scottish Housing Regulator Performance Standard Part AS 1.5

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1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with The Scottish Housing Regulator Performance Standards AS1.5, Void Management, the aims of the Void Policy are:

- To ensure that void turnover periods are reduced to a minimum, thus maximising rental income and the use of available stock through efficient control of voids.
- Ensure compliance with legal requirements and statutory obligations in respect of the landlord's responsibilities set out in the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and further detailed in Tenants Handbook and Maintenance Policy.
- Minimise expenditure on stock whilst ensuring properties are reinstated to a satisfactory minimum lettable standard.
- Promote an efficient re-letting process.

2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In line with the Association's commitment to equal opportunities, this policy can be made available free of charge in a variety of formats, including large print, translated into another language or on audio tape.

3. VOID CLASSIFICATION

Properties void at any one time can be broken into the following categories:

- Available for let – this means that the void property has had any re-let maintenance work completed and is available for occupation
- Under repair – although the tenant has vacated the property, the re-let maintenance work is still in progress.
- Held for decant – the void property is awaiting allocation as a decant flat in development programme

- Under development – the void property has either been handed over to a main contractor as part of the development programme or held for demolition.

4. TARGETS

- To retain the annual rental income lost during the year through voids to 1.5% of the total annual income. This does not include voids, which are held for development purposes.

Turnaround Targets

Category A: New build property in good condition requiring minimal repairs and standard safety checks up to letting by Housing Management.

5 Working Days

Category B: Unimproved, improved or new build in poor condition requiring numerous repairs in addition to standard checks up to letting by Housing Management.

10 Working Days

Target cost limits have been set in order to assist monitoring and budgeting of void expenditure. Exceptionally, all necessary repairs will be completed irrespective of cost in order to achieve letting.

5. REPAIRS TO BE CARRIED OUT

In recognition of the need to minimise re-let periods the Association will undertake some repairs after allocation / occupation e.g. minor joinery repairs or plumbing items. These will be agreed jointly by Housing Management and Maintenance Staff. The tenant will be advised of any outstanding works at the sign-up interview.

The following repairs are to be completed prior to re-let:

- All items essential to ensure the property is habitable in terms of health, safety and security including standard gas and electrical safety checks.

- Repairs considered impractical to undertake in an occupied property e.g. major re-plastering, timber treatment.
- Removal and replacement, where necessary of substandard tenant alterations which are considered dangerous.

6. MINIMUM RELET STANDARDS FOR VOID PROPERTIES

The Association has adopted a minimum standard for void property to ensure properties are of an acceptable standard at letting stage. The minimum standards will be used to assess the condition of the housing stock:

- Prior to termination of tenancy
- As a bench mark against which to assess void property

6.1 Gas Installation

6.1.1 The gas installation will be inspected and tested in accordance with the requirement of Gas Safety Regulations.

6.2 Electrical Installation

6.2.1 The Electrical installation including mains powered smoke alarms will be inspected and tested in accordance with the requirement of the IEE Regulations.

6.2.2 Where battery operated smoke alarms are installed, these will be replaced with a mains powered smoke alarm.

6.3 Joinery Items

6.3.1 External doors to be sound and secure and have a minimum of two keys for each lock.

6.3.2 All windows to be in good working order. Broken or cracked glass to be replaced except where further vandalism is considered likely. For vulnerable property the windows will be boarded and glazing completed immediately following letting.

6.4 Plumbing

6.4.1 Hot and cold water services and drainage to be in working order and free from leaks.

6.4.2 Sanitary ware to be safe and in a serviceable condition

6.4.3 In unimproved property ensure plumbing adequate for automatic washing machines.

6.5 Plasterwork

6.5.1 Where plastered surfaces are in a poor condition these will be repaired as necessary. This excludes minor filling to cracks etc., which can be made good by the tenant in the normal course of decoration.

6.6 Flat Clearance / Cleaning

6.6.1 Properties will be cleared of any outgoing tenant's effects where applicable.

6.6.2 The Association will not normally undertake a domestic clean, however, where a property is in a particular dirty condition, cleaning may be authorized to permit letting.

6.7 Decoration

6.7.1 Internal decoration is the responsibility of the tenant. However, it is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances where the Association will require to undertake internal redecoration works, eg through neglect.

6.7.2 The need for decoration will be recommended by the Housing or Maintenance Officer, with the decision ratified by the Depute Director.

7. FUNDING

Expenditure on voids to be funded from the void budget unless recoverable under recharge procedures.

8. PROCEDURES

To achieve this overall target, comprehensive procedures, including timescales are contained with the Housing Management and Maintenance Procedures Manual.

9. MONITORING OF PERFORMANCE

Details of voids will be presented to Housing Management and Maintenance Sub Committee on a quarterly basis.

Depute Director will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy on an ongoing basis.

10. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

These will be dealt with in accordance with the Rechargeable Repairs Policy

11. REVIEW

This policy will be subject to review every 2 years to ensure that the Policy is effective in the control of empty properties.