

# **VOID PROPERTY MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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(\*Note Lanarkshire Housing Association hereinafter referred to as LHA)

**CONTENTS**

1. Introduction.....	02
2. Supporting Documents.....	02
3. Purpose.....	02
4. Policy Objectives.....	03
5. Legislation and Regulation.....	03
6. Equality .....	04
7. Tenancy Sustainment .....	05
8. Void Management Process.....	05
9. Termination of Tenancy.....	05
10. Pre-termination.....	07
11. Void Repairs.....	07
12. Allocations.....	08
13. Performance Management.....	09
14. Tenant Satisfaction.....	10
15. Consultation and Engagement.....	10
16. Lettable Standard .....	10
17. Void Decoration.....	10
18. Risk.....	11
19. Complaints.....	11
20. Review.....	11

## **VOID PROPERTY MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Voids are properties that are currently empty because a tenancy has ended, and a new tenancy has not yet started. Voids can arise for a variety of reasons. This can be through formal termination of a tenancy, by transferring to another Association property, through abandonment, eviction, or the tenant's death.

Because rent is not due on a void property, it represents a loss to the Association (void rent loss). LHA therefore seeks to keep this loss to a minimum whilst ensuring homes meet our lettable standard and are re-let as quickly as possible.

### **2.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

The implementation of this policy is supported by the following policies and procedures.

- Termination and Void Management Procedures
- Tenancy Management Policy and Procedures
- Property Services Policies and Procedures
- Supporting and Sustaining Tenancies Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Abandonment Procedure
- Arrears Management Procedure
- Tenant Participation Strategy Complaints Handling Procedure

### **3.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach when dealing with void properties to ensure that LHA provides an efficient and customer focussed service which:

- complies with regulatory and legislative requirements
- ensures value for money in repairing void properties and achieving our lettable standard
- ensures the best use of the our stock by balancing the need to minimise rent loss with letting empty properties in line with our Allocations Policy
- maximises customer satisfaction in relation to the standard of their new home by delivering a consistent quality of accommodation
- ensures wider investment needs (including energy efficiency standards) are considered in addition to the repairs required to meet the lettable standard.

## 4.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy contributes to the delivery of the following LHA Corporate Objectives: -

- **Objective 1** - To meet or exceed the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (the Charter) and deliver fair, accessible, and responsive customer services
- **Objective 2** - To ensure all our homes meet or exceed the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) as well as the Social Housing Net Zero Standard (SHNZS)
- **Objective 3** - To improve our consultation opportunities to tenants on key measures to regularly maintain and improve the standard and quality of their home
- **Objective 4** - To improve the energy efficiency of our business operations and reduce associated carbon emissions

To contribute to these Corporate Objectives, the specific objectives of this policy are:

- Minimise void rent loss and re-let times
- Deliver a high standard of accommodation whilst ensuring void repair costs are closely managed
- Involve tenants and other customers in setting standards on void management (including determining the lettable standard)
- Ensure adequate monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place to give Committee assurance of effective void management
- Ensure that tenants are aware of their end of tenancy obligations. This will contribute to the reduction of former tenancy arrears, ensure properties are returned in an acceptable condition to reduce void repair costs and associated rechargeable repairs
- Ensure appropriate support is put in place to assist new tenants, where necessary, to promote tenancy sustainment
- Contribute to high quality estate management

## 5.0 LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

This policy complies with the relevant standards of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) as introduced by the Scottish Government in April 2012. Specifically, that “*Social Landlords manage their business so that:*

### **Standard 2 - Communication**

*“tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides”.*

**Standard 3 - Participation**

*“tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with”.*

**Standard 4 - Quality of Housing**

*tenants’ homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated; are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair; and meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH)”*

**Standard 11 - Tenancy Sustainment**

*tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.”*

**Standard 13 - Value for Money**

*tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay”.*

In addition to the above, the applicable legislation that this policy complies with includes, but is not limited to:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (and all subsequent amendments and regulations created by virtue of the Act)
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Energy Performance and Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008
- Equality Act 2010
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

## **6.0 EQUALITY**

LHA is committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all our current and prospective customers. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken alongside the review of this policy.

The assessment deemed that there are no negative impacts of this policy on any protected groups as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

As with all LHA policies and practices, we ensure these adhere to Outcome 1 of the Scottish Social Housing Charter (Equalities).



As requested, we are happy to make this policy, and any associated documents, available in alternative formats to assist customers with needs e.g., large print, braille, audio etc.

In addition, and supporting our equality commitment, we have adopted the 'Happy to Translate' service, which bridges communication gaps for service users who struggle to communicate in English.

## **7.0 TENANCY SUSTAINMENT**

LHA will always seek to support our tenants in sustaining their tenancies wherever possible. Where Housing Services staff become aware of a tenancy at risk of failing e.g. tenants in rent arrears, vulnerable tenants or those experiencing anti-social behaviour, they will look to engage with the tenant to offer assistance where possible.

For tenants experiencing financial difficulties (including rent arrears) a referral to the Advice for Tenants and Residents (AFTAR) service will be offered. The AFTAR service is a partnership delivered by Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and assists tenants with holistic advice services – including benefits advice/income maximisation and debt reprovisioning.

LHA has a Supporting and Sustaining Tenancies Policy, and we will use this to avoid unnecessary voids through effective housing management, the provision of financial inclusion advice, arranging adaptations or by signposting to other agencies where their support could prevent the tenancy from failing.

## **8.0 VOID MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

There are a number of key stages in the void management process. These do not necessarily follow the order below as this will depend on the way in which the tenancy ends – and there is some overlap in each stage.

1. Termination of Tenancy
2. Pre-termination Inspection (where applicable)
3. Void Repairs
4. Selection and Allocation

A key driver of success in this process is effective communication between the outgoing tenant and LHA staff, and between our Housing and Property teams.

## **9.0 TERMINATION OF TENANCY**

LHA tenancies have Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreements (SST) or occasionally Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreements and these agreements outline how the tenancy should be brought to an end.

9.1 Written notice of intent to terminate.

An outgoing tenant is required to provide the Association with 28 days written notice of their intention to terminate their tenancy. Their liability for rent continues until the end of this period (or longer if the keys are not returned by the end of the notice period).

Housing team members will contact the outgoing tenant to advise them about the process for terminating the tenancy, including any rent due until the date of termination and to ensure we have a forwarding address for any follow-up.

Property Services team members will be made aware of the termination in order that a pre-termination inspection can be arranged.

## 9.2 Internal Transfer

Where an LHA tenant is offered another LHA tenancy, they are not required to submit the standard 28 day written notice. They will, however, be liable for rent and responsible for the tenancy until the keys are returned.

LHA encourages internal transfers for our tenants to ensure the best use of our stock and to meet the changing needs of our tenants where their circumstances have changed.

## 9.3 Abandonment

Where it is suspected that a property has been abandoned, statutory procedures will be followed, compliant with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Housing team members will conduct reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the tenant(s) and confirm that:

1. The property is unoccupied; and
2. The tenant(s) no longer intend to occupy it as their only or principal home.
3. Enquiries may include contact with known relatives, neighbours and contact with other agencies e.g. Police Scotland, Social Work or others.

Once enquiries have concluded, and in line with sections 17 and 18 of the 2001 Act, the property will be recovered.

If furnishings or other belongings are left in the property, an inventory will be recorded and an assessment carried out on the value of the items versus the cost of storage. Depending upon the outcome of this assessment, the items will be disposed of or stored for a maximum period of six months.

Normal void management processes will then follow.

#### 9.4 Eviction

Where we have completed court action and successfully sought a repossession order to evict a tenant, we will utilise the services of a Sheriff Officer to lawfully recover the property. The tenancy will end on the date the property is recovered, and normal void processes will begin.

#### 9.5 Tenant Deceased

Where we are notified of the death of the tenant and there is no successor, the tenancy legally ends from the date of the tenant's death. We will work sensitively with the family, next of kin or representative acting on behalf of the deceased. Housing team members will deal with these situations sensitively when discussing the termination process.

### 10.0. PRE-TERMINATION

We will endeavour to carry out a pre-termination inspection of the property. The main purpose of the inspection is to:

- Assess the condition of the property to allow the property to pre-allocated in accordance with LHA's Allocation's Policy
- assess any alterations to the property to ascertain if these were permitted, undertaken to an acceptable standard and if they qualify for compensation for improvement
- identify any rechargeable repairs and provide the outgoing tenant with the opportunity to rectify any damage or alterations before leaving
- identify and agree any removal of carpets/floor coverings and any other items in the property. Discretion will be used where these are in good condition and would be of benefit to the new tenant. In these cases, they may be left by mutual agreement
- identify any adaptation or special feature of the property to assist in the allocation process
- agree the general condition that the property should be left in at termination of tenancy

### 11.0 VOID REPAIRS

Once the keys are returned from the outgoing tenant, a void inspection will be carried out by our Property Team who will determine based on the volume of work required to bring the property up to our re-let standard (Appendix 1). There are four void categories, and the target timescales are reviewed annually based on previous year's performance.

VI: Minimal level of work required.

V2: Standard level of work required.



V3: Major level of work required.

MV Management Voids will be longer term voids resulting from action required due to e.g. Fire damage/Flood/Asbestos Removal/Major Works where we would not allow or expect a tenant to live in the property.

The cost of any repairs noted to be the responsibility of the outgoing tenant will be recharged to them. Unpaid charges will be recovered in line with our debt recovery processes.

## **12.0 ALLOCATIONS**

The allocation process in most cases begins when we receive written notification of termination. This enables us to minimise our re-let time/rent loss during the void period. The main exceptions to this are when the property is terminated as a result of eviction, abandonment or on the death of the tenant where there is no qualifying successor.

The majority of LHA's stock is in North Lanarkshire, and we are part of a Common Housing Register (CHR) in North Lanarkshire. We have a 100% nomination agreement with South Lanarkshire Council, which is our other area of operation.

LHA allocates our properties in line with our Allocations Policy and procedures, and reference should be made to our Allocations Policy for further information.

### **12.1 Decision Review**

Any applicant or tenant dissatisfied with any decision taken regarding their application or any part of the allocation or void process has the right to request a review of the decision. All applicants are advised of the review process which is as follows:

12.2 An applicant or tenant can request a review of the decision to the Housing Manager (HM). The request can be made in person by making an appointment or by phone, in writing or by email. The HM will provide a written response within 5 working days.

12.3 If the applicant or tenant does not agree or accept the decision of the HM, they have the right to make a final review request to the Housing Services Director (HSD). Their review request can be made in person by making an appointment by phone, in writing or by email. The HSD will provide a written response within 5 working days. The HSD's decision will be final.

## 13.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Each stage of the void management process is monitored and reported upon by the Housing and Property teams. High level KPI performance, aligned to the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), is reported to the Management Committee through our Corporate Benchmarking. Benchmarked indicators include:

- average re-let time
- void rent loss
- % of offers refused
- % new tenancies sustained for >1 year

13.1 Further detailed monitoring, and analysis is carried out by the HM. The HM carries out an audit on the reported void completion times to ensure accuracy of the data. The HA and the Maintenance Officer<sup>1</sup> (MO) are required to complete an exemption report when a void target has not been met. The HSD reports void performance to the Housing Services Sub-Committee (HSSC) as part of the quarterly performance report.

This allows for closer scrutiny and an effective response to areas where performance is not meeting expectations. These indicators include, but are not limited to:

- void inspection and repair timescales
- voids spend vs budget (inclusive of recharges)
- average void repair costs
- termination reasons
- new tenant satisfaction with the condition of their home on moving in

Where we have failed to achieve our performance targets, detailed information is reported to the HSSC on a quarterly basis.

Our performance in the management of void properties is reported through our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) with results published in our Annual Charter Performance Report.

We will also share this information with tenants at our Tenant Focus Group and in our Newsletter.

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<sup>1</sup> In the absence of the Maintenance Officer this function will be delegated to the Property Services Officer.

#### **14.0 TENANT SATISFACTION**

All new tenants receive a settling in visit within 4-6 weeks of moving in. We use that opportunity to gather tenant views on their satisfaction with the standard of their new home when they moved in. Any feedback from these surveys is used to ensure that we continue to deliver excellent services to new tenants.

#### **15.0 CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult with our tenants.

#### **16.0 LETTABLE STANDARD**

In accordance with legislation and good practice, we have established a minimum lettable standard. This standard is detailed in Appendix 1 of this policy. A summary of this information is provided in a leaflet on Void Property Standards and issued to all new tenants.

All void properties will have a valid Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) and Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) with copies issued to the incoming tenant. Similarly, where a property has gas, it will be subject to a gas safety check prior to the new tenant moving in with a copy of the Gas Safety Certificate being issued.

We will endeavour to complete all void repairs prior to the property being let. However, on occasion, where a repair is of a minor nature and with the agreement of the new tenant, these may be completed after the date of entry.

#### **17.0 VOID DECORATION**

LHA does not generally carry out decoration within void properties. This is, in part due to the significant cost of decoration but mainly due to the subjective nature of decoration which is a matter of individual taste. Under the terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement internal decoration is the responsibility of the new tenant.

17.1 We may offer assistance with decoration subject to an assessment of the decorative order of a property during the void inspection. If necessary, a decoration pack or allowance can be offered.

17.2 Where the internal decoration is in such poor condition, or offensive, some decoration may be instructed at the discretion of the Property Team.

17.3 Assistance with decoration is determined by the condition of the property and not the tenant's financial circumstances.

Further information on decoration is included in the Lettable Standard.

## **18.0 RISK**

LHA takes a proactive approach to the management of risks – at both a strategic and operational level. The key risks that this policy seeks to mitigate are:

- Inconsistent application of the lettable standard resulting in increased costs to the Association, increased rent loss and increased re-let times
- A decrease in tenant satisfaction with the condition of their new home
- Failure to make best use of LHA stock
- A lack of clarity of tenant responsibilities when terminating their tenancy, resulting in increased void costs, rechargeable repairs and longer re-let times
- A reduction in tenancy sustainment

## **19.0 COMPLAINTS**

LHA values complaints and we endeavour to use the learning from complaints to help us improve our services.

Any complaint arising from our implementation of this policy, will be addressed through our complaints handling process.

A copy of our Complaints Policy is available on our website: [www.lanarkshireha.com](http://www.lanarkshireha.com)

## **20.0 REVIEW**

LHA undertakes to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regards to:

- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations, and guidance
- Changes in the organisation
- Continued best practice

Location	Room	Component	Standard
General	Compliance	SHQS	Homes should meet Code A-E of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard unless a valid Exemption or Abeyance can be evidenced, examples include; Exemption: Restrictive kitchen space preventing 1m3 storage Abeyance: Minority ownership preventing common improvement works such as secure common door entry systems. <b>Exemptions and Abeyances should be recorded on the property inspection sheet.</b>  Property Services staff must be familiar with the latest version of SHQS Technical Guidance: <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/shqs-technical-guidance-for-social-landlords/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/shqs-technical-guidance-for-social-landlords/</a>
		Gas Heating	Where gas is present, a certified gas safety check will be instructed prior to any new tenancy commencing.
		Gas	Where gas is present, an operational and interlinked Carbon Monoxide CO alarm should be in place (and not beyond expiry date)
		Gas Cooker	Gas cooker connections will be capped. Any bayonet fittings will be removed as seals can degrade.
		Fire Detection	Operational and interlinked fire detection should be in place (and not beyond expiry date) These are tested as part of a gas safety check, if no gas in property then they should be tested and certified separately. All homes must have: 1x smoke alarm in the living room or room you use most 1x smoke alarm in every hallway or landing (typically 2x for houses and maisonette flats) 1x heat alarm in the kitchen
		Fire Risk	Remove any polystyrene ceiling tiles and / or coving.
		Electrical	A certified EICR will be instructed prior to any new tenancy commencing.
		Electric Heating	Wet electric, storage heaters & panels will be tested and certified as part of an enhanced EICR.
		Energy / EPC	A valid EPC should be in place prior to any new tenancy commencing.
		Damp & Mould	Any evidence of damp/mould will be treated and decorated. Cause must be ascertained and rectified.
		Adaptations	Medical adaptations to be checked to ensure they are fully operational and meet the needs of the incoming tenant. Wet floor areas that are damaged or excessively stained to be replaced.
		Plumbing	If a property is empty for an extended period (more than 30 days) or in periods of extreme cold, the property will be drained down. Arrangements will be made for the supply to be reinstated prior to the new tenancy.
		Pest Control	If any evidence of pests or insect infestation, this will be treated prior to the new tenancy.
		Sliding Wardrobe Doors	Assess on a case by case basis if sliding wardrobe doors should be replaced with outward opening doors. Particular consideration should be given to mirror wardrobe doors, large family homes and space standards.
	Security	Doors (Entrance / Exit)	All entrance door locks to be renewed at every void (mortice, yale, cylinder etc) Include back door if present. A minimum 2 sets of keys and fobs (where applicable) should be provided to a new tenancy.
	Clearance	Whole Home (General)	The property, loft and garden will be cleared of all furniture and personal items belonging to previous tenants.
	Clearance	Flooring	These will typically be removed but an assessment will be made of the condition/cleanliness of any carpets, vinyl and laminate, these may be left if in good/new condition with prior agreement with the incoming tenant (or Housing Services should a prospective tenant not have been identified yet)
	Utilities	Gas & Electricity	Meters readings will be recorded at pre and post inspection. Any debt will be cleared prior to a new tenancy (unless specialist arrangements have been made with Housing Services e.g. a fuel voucher to clear minor debts)

Location	Room	Component	Standard
External	Structure	Roof	Any missing / loose tiles will be repaired and an internal check to ensure it is watertight
		Chimney(s)	Assess from ground level to determine if of sound structure, if any concerns instruct a roofer to inspect at high level.
		Walls	Free of medium to major cracks / no visible bossing to roughcast (if any)
		Gutters / Downpipes	Will be checked to ensure they are free flowing and watertight (photos typically available via cyclical gutter cleaning reports)
		Drains	Will be free from blockage and in working order.
	Environment	Path(s) / Step(s)	Path(s) / Step(s) should be checked for broken / uneven slabs and any remedial action required to ensure these are safe.
		Driveway(s)	Driveways should be checked for broken / uneven slabs and any remedial action required to ensure these are safe.
		Bins	Bins will be emptied and free from any contamination.
		Fencing / Boundary walls	Fencing / Boundary walls should be checked to ensure they are safe and in reasonable condition
		Gates	Gates will be secure to the fence post, free of defects and functioning properly.
		Garden(s)	Gardens will be free from rubbish and a one-off grass cut carried out (should this be necessary)
		Rotary Drier / Poles	Drying facilities should be available and checked for damage. If damaged, these will be repaired / replaced.
		Entrance Light(s)	Where the existing light is defective it will be repaired or replaced.
		Sheds / Outbuildings	Sheds / outbuildings will be checked and removed.
		Decking	Decking not associated with access will be checked and removed.
Internal	Access, Escape & Safety	Doors (Entrance / Exit)	Locks to be checked for easy opening and closing and adjusted where required. Doors should be checked to ensure they are secure and wind / watertight. Repair / replace defective door furniture if required (hinges, letterbox, handles etc) If forced entry has occurred the door should be assessed for repair / renewal.
		Doors (Internal)	All non-standard doors to be removed / replaced. All internal pass doors to be intact and operating correctly, any cracks or holes should be repaired or door replaced. Bathroom door should be lockable. All doors should have appropriate fire rating and be operational (e.g. closers) FD30 Fire doors are legally required in: - Escape routes, such as stairwells and landings. - Kitchens and rooms that open onto communal corridors. - Flat entrance doors that open onto shared hallways.
		Windows	Basement and upper storeys, up to a height 4.5m, should be checked to ensure they have escape windows. The use of windows for escape should only ever be considered in an emergency situation as a last resort.  Check and services to ensure fully operational. Particular attention to safety catches & safety restrictors. Renew any defective glazing (including cracked / misted units) Provide security glazing where required. Replace defective window furniture. Check and repair / replace any defective trickle vents. Ensure window keys are provided (where applicable)



Location	Room	Component	Standard
Internal	Structure	Ceilings	Damage to plaster / plasterboard will be made good by the Association (this excludes minor filling to cracks which can be made good by the tenant in the normal course of decoration)
		Walls	Damage to plaster / plasterboard will be made good by the Association (this excludes minor filling to cracks which can be made good by the tenant in the normal course of decoration)
		Floors	Floors will be checked and repaired if split or excessively squeaking. Any uneven floors will be made good.
		Stairs	Stairs will be checked and repaired if split or excessively squeaking. Any uneven treads / risers will be made good. Handrails will be checked and repaired / replaced if defective. Balustrades will be checked and repaired / replaced if defective.
		Skirtings	Skirting and facings will be re-secured and filled where necessary (or replaced if missing or damaged)
		Decoration	Any offensive graffiti will be covered.
		Decoration	Rooms painted black or very dark shades will be white washed to assist future tenant decoration.
		Decoration	Rooms stained by nicotine will be treated with an oil based primer to assist future tenant decoration. <b>Note:</b> This decoration measure only applies to Major or MV category voids.
		Decoration	Decoration packs are offered at the discretion of Property Services dependant on decorative condition. <b>Note:</b> This decoration measure only applies to Major or MV category voids.
Internal	Services	Plumbing	Stop-valves will be checked and repaired / replaced if defective. Faulty ball valves, taps, supply, and waste pipes will be repaired if necessary. <b>Stop-cock will be accessible and the location(s) recorded on the property inspection sheet.</b> If necessary, the hot water cylinder jacket will be repaired / replaced.
		Radiators	Checked to ensure these are securely attached to walls. Free from leaks & rust, small amounts of rust may be treated with heat resistant paint or replaced.
		Electrical fittings	Ensure the adequate supply of power points to comply with SHQS. Any non-standard electrical fixtures or fittings will be removed and replaced with appropriate standard outlets. Any defective or cracked sockets and switches will be replaced. All extractor fans to be operational to assist with adequate ventilation in kitchen and bathroom.
		Light fittings	Any non-standard light fixtures will be removed and replaced with appropriate pendants (IP44 sealed units in bathrooms) <b>Note:</b> IP45 light fittings are required for any lighting above showers or baths (not typically standard) Any defective or cracked pendants will be replaced. LED bulbs will be fitted in all rooms.
		Extract ventilation	Extractor fan(s) should be tested by Officer, if operational arrange for it to be cleaned. If faulty arrange repair or renewal. <b>Note:</b> Extract ventilation is mandatory for bathrooms without windows.
		Door entry systems	Any common door-entry system in place will be tested and handset checked for damage and replaced if necessary.
		Television	If there is a communal arial, ensure adequate connection points are available (domestic free-to-air television aerial)
		Appliances	Where properties are provided with appliances (driers, built in hobs etc) These should be cleaned, serviced and provided with a valid electrical PAT testing certificate.

Location	Room	Component	Standard
Internal	Bathroom(s)	General	Cracked or stained sanitaryware should be replaced.
		General	Loose sanitary fittings will be resecured.
		General	Sealant will be replaced where required.
		Bath	Taps should be fixed securely and tested to ensure working.
		Bath	Plug (and chain if applicable) should be in place.
		Shower	Shower to be tested by Officer, if operational arrange for it to be cleaned. If faulty arrange repair or renewal.
		Shower screens / curtains	Safe, fixed securely to wall and in good working order.
		Grab rails	Safe, fixed securely to wall and in good working order.
		Wash hand basin	Taps should be fixed securely and tested to ensure working.
		Wash hand basin	Plug (and chain if applicable) should be in place.
		Toilet / WC	Seat(s) be renewed at every void.
		Toilet / WC	Toilet flush should be tested by Officer. If faulty arrange repair / renewal.
		Tiling / Wallboards	Repair / renew damaged tiling or wallboards. Replace mastic if required.
Internal	Kitchen	General	Ensure the adequate supply of storage units (1m3) to comply with SHQS. <b>Note:</b> An Exemption may be permitted if 1m3 not possible due to space restrictions.
		General	Ensure the adequate supply of electrical sockets (6x 13 amp) to comply with SHQS.
		Units	All units should be checked and hinges replaced / adjusted where necessary.
		Units	All units should be checked and hinges replaced / adjusted where necessary.
		Units	Repair / renew defective kitchen units or doors
		Worktops	Worktops should be sound, and silicone sealed at wall abutments. Seal should be intact and free from mould.
		Worktops	Where worktops are defective (burnt or water damaged) these should be replaced. Minor chips, scratches, dents of damaged sections should be repaired by a cosmetic surface contractor.
		Tiling / Wallboards	Repair / renew damaged tiling or wallboards. Replace mastic if required.
		Hob hot zone	The officer should ensure each kitchen with a hob has the following: 750mm vertical clearance from hob to cabinets or cooker hoods (if present / being retained) 90mm horizontal clearance on either side of the hob for ventilation and safety. <b>Note:</b> Clearance spaces should be free from sockets, cabinets, trunking etc. The splashbacks behind hobs should be heat resistant e.g. tiled, metal or toughened glass heat resistant to 250°C
		Cooker	The Association will endeavour to provide both a gas and electric cooker connection (tenant responsible for the safe connection of the appliance) Gas cooker supplies will be retrospectively fitted where the installation does not require significant works. <b>Note:</b> Gas cooker connections are not possible for electric only flats.
		Sink	Taps should be fixed securely and tested to ensure working.
		Sink	Plug (and chain if applicable) should be in place.
		Fridge / Freezer	A 600mm space should be provided for a fridge / freezer, where space allows it should be a full height appliance space.
		Washing Machine	A 600mm space and plumbing / drainage should be provided. Supplies should be left isolated or capped (tenant responsible for the connection)

Location	Room	Component	Standard
Internal	Cleanliness	Kitchen	Free from dust from void works or dirt / grime. Wipe down wall cabinets, base units, sinks, worktops, appliance spaces, plinths and splashbacks. <b>Note:</b> Particular attention to debris above wall cabinets, the inside of all units and any grease.
		Bathroom	Free from dust from void works or dirt / grime. Wipe down toilets, sinks, pedestals, baths, taps, cubicles, shower trays, wallboards, tiles and shower heads and hoses. <b>Note:</b> Particular attention to debris behind pedestals, toilets and dirt / grime on waste pipes.
		Windows	Window glazing, frames and cills should be cleaned.
		Electrical fittings	Clean and free of paint.
		Whole Home (General)	Surfaces should be free from dust from void works or dirt / grime. Floors should be swept, and free from any debris. Note: Cupboards are included.
		Whole Home (Trauma)	Where there are issues around Health and Safety (such as drug paraphernalia, body fluids or faeces) a specialist cleaning company will be appointed.

## Equality Impact Assessment

### Lanarkshire Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Tool



Name of the <b>policy / proposal</b> to be assessed	Void Property Management Policy	Is this a <b>new policy / proposal</b> or a <b>revision</b> ?	Revision
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	Liz White		
1. Briefly describe the <b>aims, objectives and purpose</b> of the policy / proposal		Sections 1-3 of the policy document outlines this information	
2. <b>Who is intended to benefit</b> from the policy / proposal? ( <i>e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors</i> )		<p>This policy will assist staff by outlining how our void properties are to be managed from point of termination up to and including the settling-in visit with the new tenant.</p> <p>In addition, the updated Lettable standard (appendix 1) is explicit in terms of works to be instructed at void. This will assist staff instructing repairs (and our contractors in carrying these out). It will also assist staff responsible for carrying out viewings for prospective tenants</p>	

## Equality Impact Assessment

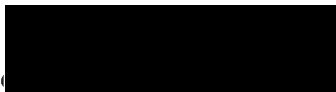
	The policy also benefits applicants (prospective tenants) by setting a clear and minimum lettable standard below which the Association should not fall. This will assist in managing customer expectations and in being able to highlight where the Association has fallen short of the standard (with a means for rectifying)
<b>3. What <b>outcomes</b> are <b>wanted</b> from this policy / proposal ? (e.g. the benefits to customers)</b>	<p>The outcomes of this policy for customers will be the provision of a new property repaired to a high standard and without un-necessary delay.</p> <p>It will also allows the new tenant to be assured that the property meets the appropriate legislative/safety standards and provides information in relation to energy efficiency (EPC) and, where appropriate, upcoming planned maintenance.</p>

<p><b>4. Which <b>protected characteristics</b> could be <b>affected</b> by the proposal? (tick all that apply)</b></p> <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap; justify-content: space-between;"> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age</div> <div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Race</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sex</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation</div> </div>		
<p><b>5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the <b>protected characteristics</b> listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.</b></p>		
<p><b>6. Describe the <b>likely positive or negative impact(s)</b> the policy / proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4</b></p>	<p><b>Positive impact(s)</b></p> <p>The general policy is that the new tenant is responsible for decorating the property (out with some limited exceptions e.g offensive décor).</p>	<p><b>Negative impact(s)</b></p>

## Equality Impact Assessment

	<p>However, the Association recognise that there is potential for some tenants through age or disability, are unable to carry this out themselves.</p> <p>The updated 'Lettable Standard' in this policy allows for discretion by the Housing Manager/Director to consider offering support (supported by a corresponding budget)</p>	
<p><b>7. What actions are required</b> to address the impacts arising from this assessment? <i>(This might include collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).</i></p>	<p>We will monitor need/uptake of this support (this will include measuring of satisfaction at Settling in Visits and when analysing tenancy sustainment)</p>	

Signed:



Housing Services Director

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed: 20/08/25

***Please attach the completed document as an appendix to your policy / proposal report***