



Void Management Policy & Procedures

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Proposed Review Date	May 2026

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1. Introduction, Legislation, and Regulatory Standards

- 1.1 Yorkhill Housing Association aims to have an efficient and effective void management policy and procedure to reduce any period where a property is empty, therefore reducing the number of days where rent cannot be charged (“void loss”).
- 1.2 Good void management will ensure that properties are let in a good state of repair, therefore enhancing the organisations reputation with new tenants, and also protecting the association’s assets.

1.3 Relationships to Other Policies

- 1.4 This policy exists in relation to other Yorkhill Housing Association policies:
 - Allocations Policy
 - Standard Repairs Policy
 - Estate Management Policy

1.5 Scottish Social Housing Charter

- 1.6 The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets standards that the Association should meet and the following are relevant to void management:
- 1.7 **Outcome 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 also meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) by December 2020.”*
- 1.8 **Outcome 5 (Repairs, maintenance and improvements):** *“tenants’ homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.”*

- 1.9 **Outcome 13 (Value for money):** *“tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.”*

1.10 Equalities

- 1.11 The Equality Act 2010 sets out protected characteristics and any tenant, or prospective tenant, of Yorkhill Housing Association will be treated fairly and with dignity and respect regardless of any protected characteristic listed below:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

- 1.12 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out to assess how this Void Management Policy affects customers who hold one or more of the above protected characteristics. *(See Section 5)*

2. Procedures

2.1 Pre-Termination Inspection

- 2.2 Under their tenancy agreement with Yorkhill Housing Association tenants are required to provide 28 days' notice to terminate their tenancy. During this period a joint inspection of the house should be carried out by a member of the Property Services team and the Housing Management team to check the condition of the property, plan any repairs required, and to ensure the tenant leaves the property in a suitable condition.
- 2.3 Tenants will be asked to leave their property in a good condition – the property should be cleared of all items of furniture, clothing and personal effects. The carpets should be removed. All surfaces, walls, fittings, and fixtures should be cleaned. Additionally any damage or missing fixtures should be replaced. Yorkhill Housing Association will pass on the costs to carry out such work to the outgoing tenant. This should, where reasonably practicable, be explained to the outgoing tenant beforehand, however some issues may only become evident once the property has been cleared. Additionally tenants should be advised that any items left for a bulk uplift should be reported to Glasgow City Council to ensure that is removed.
- 2.5 Where possible the outgoing tenant will be provided with an estimate of the cost to carry out the work and will be offered the opportunity to carry out the work themselves. The Association may also carry out the required work at the request of the tenant and a mandate for repayment of the costs to do so should be completed.
- 2.6 Tenants will also be reminded to take their own meter readings and asked to notify the Association of who their energy suppliers are. Tenants are also asked to leave any utility keys or cards for their meters to allow them to be reused.

2.7 Termination Date

- 2.8 Keys should be returned to the Association as soon as possible on, or before, the agreed termination date of the tenancy. The equivalent daily rent will be charged for each day until the keys are returned to the Association following the termination date (inclusive of the date the keys are returned).
- 2.9 All sets of keys should be returned. The Association will arrange for an inspection of the empty property to be carried out as soon as possible.

2.10 Void Inspection

- 2.11 The Property Services team will inspect the void property and prepare a plan of works required to bring the property to at least the 'Yorkhill Standard' (*Section 3*). This includes checking the Investment works schedule for windows, kitchens bathrooms, boilers and radiators. Photographs of the property should be taken to evidence its condition and the work required.
- 2.12 The following work is required for every void property:
- **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC):** A valid EPC should be held for each property, however where an existing EPC is more than 10 years old ('Pre-RdSAP 2009') a new EPC should be ordered. A copy of this should be made available to the new tenant.
 - **Gas Safety Certificate (CP12):** Where required (properties on the Annual Gas Maintenance program) an inspection of the gas appliances including a full service of any Yorkhill HA appliances shall be carried out. A copy of the CP12 should be made available to the new tenant.
 - **Electrical Safety Check:** The property's electrical systems should be checked for safety and all necessary certification shall be provided to the Association. A copy of the electrical safety certificate should be made available to the new tenant.
 - **Window Safety Check:** A service of the property's windows should be carried out to ensure they operate safely.

- **Sound Insulation Check:** Where appropriate properties in tenement accommodation will be checked to establish if a suitable level of sound insulation is present. The Association may decide to install sound insulation to properties which fail this standard.
- **Legionella** – To mitigate the increased potential risk associated with voids, the Association will arrange the following: thoroughly flush all taps; clean and disinfect, or replace, all shower heads; inspect and report on water storage tank, where present

2.13 If appropriate a check of any Artex (or other suspect material) will be tested for Asbestos. Separate procedures for dealing with identified Asbestos will be followed.

2.14 Post Inspection

2.15 Once the void repair work has been carried out a final 'post-inspection' should be carried out by the Property Services team to ensure the property is ready to let. Photographs should be taken to evidence the condition of the property.

2.16 New Tenant Procedures

2.17 The Housing Management team will ensure an efficient process of selecting and signing up a new tenant to minimise void rental loss.

2.18 Immediately upon receiving a termination of tenancy from a tenant the Housing Management team should start preparations for selecting a new tenant. Consideration will be given to any allocation priorities or targets (for example Section 5 Homeless targets).

- 2.19 The Housing Management team will attempt to arrange a viewing of the property at the earliest opportunity. This may include arranging a viewing while the outgoing tenant is still resident in the property where this is appropriate, or where the property is still undergoing repair work. In this instance the Housing Management team should liaise with the Property Services team to ensure that the property is suitable and safe for viewing.
- 2.20 Once a potential tenant has indicated their willingness to accept the property the appropriate sign-up paperwork, including a tenancy agreement, should be signed. The date of entry will be established following the post-inspection has been carried out.
- 2.21 A New Tenant Visit should be carried out within 4 weeks of the commencement of the tenancy to ensure tenants are settling in well to their new homes.
- 2.22 Consideration will be made to the prospective and outgoing tenant's to ensure that there are no equalities issues. Reasonable adjustments can be made to this process if required, for example ensuring there is adequate access for disabled persons or extra support for elderly people.

2.23 Winter Voids

- 2.24 Properties which will be empty through the winter should be prepared to avoid damage due to cold weather. This may include draining the heating systems.

2.25 Death of Tenants

- 2.26 Following a tenant passing away the Association will check if anyone may be able to succeed to the tenancy. If no-one is granted the succession the tenant's family or estate will be allowed a period of 14 days to clear the property. The Association may agree to an extension of this period if suitable, and may request the rent is covered for any extension.

2.27 Terminations Without Notice

- 2.28 Tenants are contractually obligated to provide 28 days written notice to terminate their tenancy, and tenants will be held to this timescale if keys are received without notice. Tenants will still be liable for all rent due during this period.

3. Yorkhill Standard

3.1 Yorkhill Housing Association will ensure that every void property meets a high standard, known as the Yorkhill Standard:

- Properties should be safe, secure and as energy efficient as practical;
 - A valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) should be present.
 - The property's electrical systems should be tested to ensure they are safe.
 - The central heating system should be in good working order and will be tested to ensure they are safe. A Gas Safety Certificate (CP12) should be provided to the tenant.
 - Windows should be checked to ensure they are fully operational and any safety features are in working order.
- A brand new WC seat and shower curtain will be installed in every void property.
- The kitchen should be in a good condition and free of defects or damage.
- The property should be clean and tidy with all surfaces, fittings, and fixtures cleaned.

3.2 Yorkhill Housing Association is committed to achieve the targets set out under the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). Due to the Association's stock it is not always possible for every property to meet this standard, however improvements may be considered to meet this where possible.

3.3 Yorkhill Housing Association is committed to ensuring its homes meet The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) where possible. Consideration will be taken to work required in void properties to help the Association meet this standard.

4. Void Management Risk Assessment

No	Risk	Grs L'hd (1–5)	Grs Imp (1-5)	Grs Risk Totl	Managed by (key systems / processes):	Lead Individual	Net L'hd (1–5)	Net Imp (1-5)	Net Risk Totl	Action Required
	Strategic Risks									
1.	Ensure all practices comply with Policy & ARC	5	5	25	Reviewing conditions set out in ARC and reviewing recording methods to comply. Monthly performance meetings to take account of this.	All staff /Committee	1	4	4	Set up of new ARC targets for HM SHR Assurance Statements.
2.	Damage to organisation reputation	3	5	15	Good service delivery essential. Satisfaction Surveys. Monitoring of complaints received.	GK	2	2	4	Continual monitoring of service and complaints
3.	G.D.P.R. Breaches.	3	4	7	Policies and procedures. Protocols.	HM	2	3	5	Incident register developed and maintained. Housekeeping rules. Data sharing agreements. Addendums for contractors and other service providers. Data Protection Policy.

I M P A C T	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		1	2	3	4	5
PROBABILITY						

5. Equalities Impact Assessment

Yorkhill Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Tool			
Name of Policy/proposal to be assessed	Void Management Policy	Is this a new policy or a revision?	Revision
Person responsible for the assessment.	Grant Kennedy, Housing Services Manager		
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy.	Policy for handling void properties and the process for ensuring these are ready for let.		
Who is intended to benefit from the policy/proposal (e.g. applicants, staff, tenants, contractors).	Applicants will benefit from the policy as they may be offered a void property.		
What outcomes are wanted from this policy/proposal (e.g. the benefits to customers).	The benefits to applicants and tenants are that good quality housing is available for let. The process should be quick and efficient reducing void rental loss.		
Which protected characteristics could be affected by the proposal? (tick all that apply)			
☒ Age	☒ Disability		
☒ Marriage/Civil Partnership	☒ Pregnancy/Maternity		
☒ Race	☒ Religion or Belief		
☒ Gender	☒ Gender Reassignment		
☒ Sexual Orientation			
If the policy/proposal is not relevant to any of the protected characteristics listed above state why and end the process here.			
Describe the likely positive or negative impact(s) the policy/proposal could have on the protected characteristics identified.	Positive impact		Negative impact
	The property should be brought to a good standard and staff will be able to implement extra support or services if required in order to support any customer with a protected characteristic who may find a barrier in this process.		
What actions are required to address the impacts arising from this assessment? (This might include; collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).	Staff should establish if there are likely to be any barriers or any impact on any customer involved due to any protected characteristics. This may already be known through our involvement with the outgoing tenant, and should be established with a prospective tenant through their application form, and by discussing their application and the property prior to a viewing.		

Signed: Grant Kennedy

Job Title: Housing Services Manager

Date the Equality Impact and Diversity Impact Assessment was completed: 17th December 2019

