



# Void Management Policy

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Regulatory Standards Mapping		
✓	1	The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
✓	2	The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.
✓	3	The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.
	4	The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.
	5	The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.
	6	The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.
	7	The RSL ensures that any organisational changes or disposals it makes safeguard the interests of, and benefit, current and future tenants.

Core Objective Mapping	
✓	Provision of affordable social housing
✓	Local control and accountability
✓	Efficient local service provision
✓	Viability
	Equality of opportunity for all customers
✓	Legal and regulatory compliance

Governance

HR

Property

Housing &  
Factoring

Finance & IT

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# Introduction

## Overview

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- 1.1 Yorkhill Housing Association (The 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.

## Connected Policies

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- 1.3 The following policies are connected with the Void Management Policy and may have some relevant or associated content:
  - Allocations Policy
  - Standard Repairs Policy
  - Estate Management Policy

# Procedures

## Pre-Termination Inspection

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- 2.1 Under their tenancy agreement with The 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 members of Property Services and Housing Management to check the condition of the property, plan repairs required, and to ensure the tenant leaves the property in a suitable condition.
- 2.2 Tenants will be asked to leave their property in a good condition – and should be cleared of all items of furniture, clothing and personal effects. Carpeting and floor coverings should be removed. All surfaces, walls, fittings, and fixtures should be cleaned. Additionally, damaged or missing fixtures should be replaced. The 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.
- 2.3 Pre-inspection forms must be uploaded to the void record in HomeMaster immediately after the visit. Compliance will be monitored via quarterly checks.
- 2.4 Where possible the outgoing tenant will be provided with an estimate of the cost to carry out the work and 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.
- 2.5 Tenants will 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.

## Termination Date

- 2.6 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).
- 2.7 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.

## Void Inspection

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- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 **N:B Additional Tenant Recharges:** these are recharges not noted at the pre-termination stage either because the tenant noted they would be dealing with these items or where the item was hidden from view. The Association will identify, communicate, and recover tenant recharges as applicable. This includes providing tenants with clear information on costs and offering mandate options for recovery.
- 2.10 The following work is required for every void property:
- **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC):** An EPC is held for each property, if the EPC is overdue or due within that financial year a new EPC will be obtained. A copy will be made available to the new tenant.
  - **Gas Safety Certificate (CP12):** All properties with a gas inlet pipe, meter and/or gas appliances will have a full service of any Yorkhill HA appliance. A copy of the CP12 will 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.
  - **Deafening Check:** Flats above commercial premises will be checked to ensure there is a suitable layer of deafening material (60mm).
  - **Legionella:** To mitigate the potential risk within void properties, the Association will arrange the following: thoroughly flush all taps; clean, disinfect, or replace, shower heads; Check water storage tank.
  - **Ventilation:** All vents, fans, common ventilation systems and window vents shall be cleaned and checked to ensure they are operational. Extractor fans shall be serviced and cleaned during the void period.
- 2.11 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.

## Post Inspection

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- 2.12 Once the void repair work has been carried out a final 'post-inspection' should be carried out by the Property Services and Housing Management team to ensure the property is ready to let. Photographs should be taken to evidence the condition of the property at this point and held on file for future review.
- 2.13 A post-inspection form will be completed for every void property and uploaded to HomeMaster. This ensures consistency with the Yorkhill Standard.

## New Tenant Procedures

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- 2.14 The Housing Management team will ensure an efficient process of selecting and signing up a new tenant to minimise void rental loss.
- 2.15 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).
- 2.16 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.
- 2.17 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.
- 2.18 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.
- 2.19 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.

## Winter Voids

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- 2.20 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.

## Death of Tenants

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- 2.21 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.

## Terminations Without Notice

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- 2.22 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.

# Yorkhill Standard

## Void Condition Standards

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- 3.1 The 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. (See items 2.8 to 2.12 above.)
  - All repair work will be identified and completed, including removing and filling all brackets, hanging hooks, Rawl plugs screws and nails. Where appropriate investment works will be carried out.
  - Internal doors should be checked to ensure they are fully operational, and appropriate draught-proofing is applied.
  - A brand-new WC seat and shower curtain will be installed in every void property and new plugs and chains as required.
  - Discoloured light fittings and wiring will be replaced and low energy light bulbs will be fitted to all pendants.
  - Where wallpaper has been damaged this will be stripped back and walls ready for new decoration.
  - All ceilings will be checked for cracks and discoloration. Any cracks or damage will be filled and/or sealed as appropriate. Stain block will be applied where there is discolouration and two coats of white emulsion to finish.
  - The kitchen and bathroom should be in a good condition and free of defects or damage.
  - The property should be clean and tidy with all window, window sills, woodwork, sanitary appliances, kitchen units and work surfaces, and kitchen sink thoroughly cleaned, floors will be free from debris.
  - Utility prepayment meters will be free of debt, with a useable credit present.
- 3.2 The Association is committed to achieve the targets set out under current and future energy efficiency standards. Due to the Association's stock, it is not always possible for every property to meet these standards, however improvements may be considered to meet this where possible.
- 3.3 The 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.
- 3.4 The lettable standard is documented and linked to the post-inspection form to ensure consistency across all void properties.

## Roles & Responsibilities

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### 3.5 Property Services Manager:

- Strategic Oversight: Manages the void maintenance process and ensures adherence with the Associations' "Re-let Standard".
- Contract Management: Leads procurement for void contractors utilising the Associations Maintenance Framework and monitors their performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Budgeting: Monitors overall void expenditure, liaising with Finance Manager.
- Compliance: Ensures all properties meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and statutory safety requirements (Gas, Electric, Energy Performance) before re-letting.

### 3.6 Housing & Factoring Manager:

- Void Minimisation: Primarily responsible for reducing "rent loss" by ensuring properties are re-occupied as quickly as possible.
- Allocation Leadership: Oversees the allocation process to ensure properties are offered to the highest-priority applicants, including authorisation of offers.
- Performance Monitoring: Reports on re-let times and refusal rates to the Management Committee and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

### 3.7 Housing Officers:

- Tenancy Termination: Conducts pre-termination inspection with property Services Officer to acquire information on condition of property, identify tenant responsible damage and explain the move-out process.
- Matching & Offering: Identifying suitable applicants from waiting lists and recommending formal offers of housing to the Housing & Factoring Manager
- Lettings: Conducts viewings, signs the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, and manages the initial "settling-in" period.

### 3.8 Property Services Officers:

- Technical Inspection: Conducts the initial void inspection (usually within 24–48 hours of vacancy) to create a detailed "Schedule of Works".
- Works: Raise repair orders for contractors based on the re-let standard.
- Quality Control: Performs post-repair inspections to ensure the contractor has completed all safety checks and quality standards before the Housing Officer accepts the keys

### 3.9 Clerical Duties (Officers and Assistants):

- Administrative Flow: Manages the "keys diary," ensuring keys move between contractors and Housing Officers without delay.
- Data Entry: Updates the internal housing management system (HomeMaster) with void status updates.
- Utility Management: Coordinates with utility companies to ensure meters are cleared and credit is available for testing.

### 3.10 Contractors:

- Execution of Works: Complete works to Yorkhill Standard, carry out physical repairs, cleaning, and clearances within agreed timescales.
- Safety Certification: Provides mandatory Gas Safety documentation and Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) window safety checks and other tests and checks as instructed e.g. Asbestos Legionella or deafening.
- Reporting: Notifies the Association immediately of any major issues (e.g., structural damage or asbestos) that will delay the re-let.
- Informs the Association via regular progress reports per property.

# Performance Monitoring

## Key Performance Indicators

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4.1 The Association aims to achieve a void turnaround targets per Table 1 below monitored via ARC reporting.

- Pre-Inspection – Arranged on notification of termination – target 5 Working days
- Initial Void Inspection – no more than 2 working days from receipt of keys from Housing Management
- Post Inspection – No more than 1 working day from notification of completion by contractor.

4.2 Table 1. Target days per void type:

Void Category	Description of maintenance works required.	Target working days for Property Services
V1.	Safety checks as defined in item 2.12 above and lock change only.	3
V2.	Safety checks as defined in item 2.12 above, lock change and minor repairs	5
V3.	Safety checks as defined in item 2.12 above, lock change, minor repairs with asbestos or other specialist check/report required Inc EPC.	10
V4.	Safety checks as defined in item 2.12 above, lock change and Major or Investment works	15 or Void Unlettable facility used
V5.	Safety checks as defined in item 2.12 above, lock change, Major or Investment works and Specialist Consultant or Procurement or acquisition or full refurbishment mix of all categories	Unlettable facility used

## 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.	Robert Calvert, Property 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).	New tenants will benefit from this policy as a clear process for void properties is detailed.		
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)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability		
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity		
<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or Belief		
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Reassignment		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Orientation			
If the policy/proposal is not relevant to any of the protected characteristics listed above state why and end the process here:			
This policy relates primarily to the handling of physical properties, and not people – this is covered by the Allocations Policy.			
Describe the likely positive or negative impact(s) the policy/proposal could have on the protected characteristics identified.	Positive impact	Negative impact	
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).			