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Policy Name	Void Management Policy
Policy Author	Head of Housing Services
Approved by Sub Committee	n/a
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West Whitlawburn Housing Co-operative will provide this policy on request at no cost, in larger print, in Braille, in audio or other non-written format, and in a variety of languages. Please contact the office.

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Our void management policy aims to ensure that vacant properties are repaired to a consistent standard to ensure that they can be allocated as quickly as possible. By doing so this will ensure that any lost rent due to properties being empty is kept to a minimum. In order to achieve this, joint working between all parties along with a flexible and solutions-based focus is encouraged.
- 1.2 This policy should be considered along with the procedure for dealing with void properties (Appendix 1). A dedicated document which outlines staff roles is included as Appendix 2.
- 1.3 All void properties will meet our minimum lettable standard (appendix 3).
- 1.4 Void times will be kept to a minimum by clearly advising the contractor of the work required, agreeing completion timescales and close monitoring of agreed works whilst they are ongoing.
- 1.5 We will have clear processes which will define when a property is unlettable and we will record and evidence the reasons for this, along with clearly planning the property's return to our lettings pool.
- 1.6 This policy should be used in conjunction with the relevant advance notice process for the biomass heating system.

2 Legal, Good Practice & Regulatory Framework

- 2.1 We will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations which impact the Void Management Policy, including:
 - Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998;
 - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012;
 - Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2013;
 - The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2006 & 2014;
 - Data Protection Act 1998 & GDPR 2018
- 2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following key policies:
 - Allocations Policy
 - Estate Management Policy
 - Annual Assurance Statement
 - Asset Management Strategy

- Business Plan
- Risk Management Policy
- Dampness and Mould Policy
- Legionella Management Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Asbestos Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Lift Safety Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Housing Alarm Policy

2.3 The Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to void management by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following:

- Quality of housing – tenants’ homes, as a minimum, when they are allocated are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and any other building quality standard in place throughout the tenancy; and meet the relevant Energy Efficiency and Zero Emission Heat Standard.
- Estate management, antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes – tenants and others live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.
- Value for money – tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

3 Equality and Diversity

3.1 We are committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all people in our work. In implementing this Policy, we will provide a fair and equal service to all people, irrespective of factors such as gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.

4. Policy Review

4.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless there is a requirement to review out-with this cycle.

4.2 The next policy review will be due in December 2029.

Procedures for dealing with void properties

1. When the tenancy ends

- 1.1 Four weeks' notice is legally required when a tenant ends their tenancy. If notice is received by telephone, we will write to the tenant in response to issue the End of Tenancy form which outlines our expectations to the outgoing tenant. Once this is returned a pre-selection of the property should be made in line with the Co-operative's Allocation policy.
- 1.2 If a tenant dies and there is no one to continue the tenancy we will terminate the tenancy on date of death but allow the tenant's representatives realistic time to clear the property. The reasonable time will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances.
- 1.3 End of tenancy visits will be conducted to ensure the outgoing tenant leaves the property in an acceptable condition. This visit will also give an indication of any standard or rechargeable repairs that will be required to bring the property up to a lettable standard.
- 1.4 All void properties will be registered under the Void Care scheme (or equivalent) to ensure utility changes/supply do not impact on the void performance time.

2. Inspecting properties and instructing works

- 2.1 The void house inspection should be carried out within one working day of the keys being returned to the office. Whenever possible the inspection should be carried out in the morning to allow lines to be raised the same day. The inspection will be carried out by the Housing Officer and the Property Officer.
- 2.2 The Housing Officer will write/record the necessary repairs on the vacant house inspection form and then pass the form to the Property Assistant. The Property Officer will take photos during the inspection and put into the respective folder within one working day. Property Services staff will raise the lines for the work. The Housing Officer will agree the expected date of return of the property with the Property Services team.
- 2.3 Any rechargeable repair works will be agreed and recorded separately to allow processing of a works order that is specific to these works.

- 2.4 A minimum standard level of works has been agreed and is attached in appendix 3.
- 2.5 In most instances, where only minimum works are required, five working days will be agreed. This will vary depending on the level of works required to bring the property up to a lettable standard. In such instances, the Property Assistant will negotiate a realistic timescale with the Contractor.
- 2.6 If a clear out or valet is required, the Property Assistant will schedule the quickest possible date for this with the contractor.
- 2.7 The repair lines will be raised on the same day or first thing on the next working day. During the void period the works will be monitored by the Property Officer and the Housing Officer.
- 2.8 In cases where a property has been fire damaged the property will be recorded as unlettable. The Property Manager will progress any resulting insurance claim with the loss adjuster. Once works are complete the let will then be progressed as usual.

3 Monitoring/completion of works

- 3.1 The Property Services team will liaise with the Housing Officer while the property is under repair to anticipate and resolve any problems and ensure the prompt return of the property to the letting pool. This is in the form of weekly meetings where progress is monitored, and performance is measured.
- 3.2 Once agreed works are complete the Property Officer will complete a post works visit and take photos of the property in its "available to let" condition. The Housing Officer should also attend this visit whenever possible. Photos will be transferred to the respective void folder within one working day. The Property Officer will take final meter readings during this visit. Once this is complete the property is returned to the Housing Officer and will be recorded as an "Allocations Void".

4 Adapted Properties

- 4.1 Where we establish that a property has been adapted e.g. wet floor shower, we will consult our list of households who require such features. If we are not able to identify a suitable household, we will consider

approaching other local landlords to enquire if they have any suitable households on their lists.

- 4.2 We will support households who, for religious reasons, require specific bathing facilities by listing them for such properties.

5 Accompanied Viewings

- 5.1 The applicant who has been selected for the property should be advised of the target completion date and an accompanied viewing arranged. If only minimal work is required in the property, the accompanied viewing should be arranged before the work is started or while it is ongoing.
- 5.2 If the outgoing tenant agrees an accompanied viewing can be carried out with the outgoing tenant in situ. This may result in the incoming tenant's tenancy starting on the day after the departing tenant's tenancy ends and a nil void time. This is only possible if statutory safety repairs are complete, and any other void repairs are minimal and can safely be carried out once the new tenant has moved in.
- 5.3 In some instances it may not be appropriate to arrange a viewing prior to the outgoing tenant leaving due to the anticipated work required to bring the property up to an acceptable standard. The Housing Officer will decide this on a void-by-void basis.
- 5.4 Viewings can be carried out only if the house is in a hazard-free condition.

6 Decants

- 6.1 When a property has been identified as being required for decant purposes an empty house inspection should be carried and repairs instructed in line with clause 1.5 of this policy. When decant properties are returned to the letting pool by the Property Team they will be in a lettable condition and should not require further repairs. Thereafter accompanied viewings can be arranged immediately and the let progressed.

7 Monitoring, Targets and Void Budget

- 7.1 The Head of Housing Services will monitor letting split breakdown monthly during case discussions with Housing Officers.

- 7.2 The Head of Housing Services will monitor all aspects of void performance monthly and report to the Performance, Assurance and Regulation Sub Committee quarterly.
- 7.3 If there are any concerning trends or overall problems with the void repair times the Housing Officer will raise the concerns with the Head of Housing Services and the Property Manager. The Property Manager will then contact the Contractor to resolve the matter.
- 7.4 The Head of Housing Services and the Property Manager will monitor the void budget monthly and highlight and address any areas causing concern.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Once notice of termination is received

- Incoming void details – property address and anticipated end of tenancy date - will be added to the next void meeting minute and to HomeMaster by the Housing Officer.

2. Pre-end of tenancy inspection of property

- This will be carried out by the Concierge Manager, Housing Officer or Assistant Housing Officer. Scheduled dates/times of these visits will be noted on the minute of the void meeting and/or the end of tenancy inspection form.
- The completed inspection sheet will be passed to the Property Team and will be filed within the tenancy house file upon completion of works.

3. Offer of tenancy

- The Housing Officer will review the breakdown of lets Year to Date and will determine the list which the property will be offered to. The Housing Officer in adhering to the Allocations Policy will make a formal offer to the most suitable applicant.
- If the exiting tenant will allow a tenanted viewing, the Housing Officer, Concierge Manager or Assistant Housing Officer will carry out this viewing. All such information will be noted on the minute of the void meeting. This will allow WWHC staff to be made aware of any agreement to leave furniture between exiting and incoming tenants, and to ensure a mandate is signed for any such agreement.

4. Void inspection

- The tenancy will be ended by the Housing Officer.
- A receipt of keys will be updated on the lettings board and added to the void meeting minute by the Housing Officer.
- Keys will be split between the Concierge Station and the Main office by the Property Assistant.
- The formal void inspection will be carried out within 1 working day of key receipt and will be completed jointly by the Property Officer and the Housing Officer.

- The Property Officer or Property Assistant will raise the repairs within 1 working day following completion of this visit.
- If the viewing did not take place whilst the exiting tenant was in place, it should be considered at this stage. If the property is not fit to be viewed (e.g. if the state of repair is extremely poor) the date should be noted when it is anticipated that the repairs will be to a stage at which the viewing can be conducted. This should be agreed between teams and noted on the void meeting minute. The Housing Officer will liaise directly with the Property Assistant to agree the viewing date.

5. Void repair progress

- Void repairs and progress of same will be monitored by the Property Officer. The Property Officer will attend the vacant property every second day to physically check on repairs progress.
- A formal repair update will be presented by the Property Officer or Property Assistant at the weekly void meeting and will be included in full within the minute. Out-with these meetings the same members of staff will update the Housing Officer or Assistant Housing Officer of any anticipated dates for return of the property, and of any unforeseen delays.
- Where any specific issue or learning is identified this will be discussed between all involved parties during the void meetings, and on a team specific basis if necessary.
- Void performance will be reported by the Head of Housing Services on a quarterly basis to the PAR sub-committee and during Senior Staff meetings if required.
- All permitted exclusions (in line with ARC guidance) will be added jointly to the HomeMaster system by the Property Assistant and the Head of Housing Services. Proforma documents recording all relevant information will be retained for audit purposes.

6. Repairs contractors KPIs

- If any performance issues are noted and if KPIs are not met this will be actioned by the Property Manager in terms of the repairs contract. If such performance is not remedied an alternative contractor, as per the terms of the contract, can be utilised along with a penalty clause for the original contractor.

7. Decants

- When it has been identified that a property is required for decant the Head of Housing Services will lead this full process including administration of void loss exclusions and instructions to housing and

property officers and assistants of repairs and removal arrangements.

8. Void Loss/Actual Spend on Void Properties

- 8.1 Void loss and performance will be reported by the Head of Housing Services to the full staff group at the monthly periodic meetings. This will be discussed in greater detail at Senior Staff level/meetings if there are any significant concerns noted.
- 8.2 Quarterly financial void loss will be reported by the Head of Housing Services to the Finance Officer and will be discussed at Senior Staff level/meeting if any concerns are noted.

Appendix 3

Void minimum lettable standard

Works	Minimum Standard
General Cleanliness	The house will be cleared of all personal belongings/rubbish from the previous tenant. If necessary, property will also be sprayed for infestation. No carpets or floor coverings will be left in the property. Floors will be swept out; kitchen and bathrooms surfaces will be washed down. Caged areas and tenant stores will be emptied.
Garden Areas	Any private garden area will be cleared of rubbish.
Electrics	An electrical check will be carried out in all properties. Any alterations to the electrical system will be corrected to ensure compliance with regulations. All non-standard light fittings will always be replaced with standard ones.
Gas	A gas safety check will be carried out in all properties. Any alterations to the gas system will be corrected to ensure compliance with the regulations.
Gas/Electric Cooking	Where the previous tenant has left a cooker, this will be removed as we are unable to certify their safety.
Smoke and Heat Alarm	The smoke alarm(s) will be tested in all properties. Within the Towers, concierge will verify call received at the station.
Communal aerial	The aerial socket will be inspected and will be secure to the wall.
Water Supply	During the months November - March or during severe cold spells, consideration will be paid to whether stopcocks should be shut off and the water supply drained down. If water supply is drained down access panels will not be reinstated until the water has been turned on.
Medical Adaptations	All medical adaptations will be inspected to ensure that they are fully operational and meet with the needs of the incoming tenant where possible.
Housing alarms	The unit will be fully inspected and a test call put through to the concierge station. If the unit is not required for the new tenant, it will be removed and reallocated.
Windows	All windows will be fully operational and checked for safety catches/retainers. All tenants will be issued with thumb turns or keys.
Front Door	The minimum lock standard is a mortice on a timber door or a security lock on security door. Check security and for drafts/water ingress. If relevant the glazing panel will also

	be checked. 2 sets of keys will be available for the new tenant. If not, a lock change will be carried out.
Internal Pass Doors	All pass doors will be intact and operating properly. Bathroom doors will have locking device. In MSF properties, a fire door will be in place between living room and hall and the bomber spring must be fully functional. Any pass doors which have been replaced by the former tenant and have glass panels will be replaced with the Co-operative's standard doors.
Cupboard Doors	All cupboard doors will be intact, operating properly and have appropriate handles
Floors	All loose and missing floorboards will be re-secured/ replaced - floor surface will be even to allow carpets to be laid.
Skirtings, facings and walls	Missing or severely damaged skirtings/facings will be replaced. If possible, to repair - should be re-secured and filled where necessary. Large holes in walls should be plastered however the new tenant will be responsible for any minor holes.
Heating system	The heating system will be fully functioning with all radiators attached securely to the walls. Radiators will be appropriate for each room size. In Towers and Low-Rise properties, a smart meter will be in the property to allow your consumption and payments to be monitored. A heating account will be set up in the new Tenant's name and any outstanding balance accrued by the former tenant will be cleared.
Kitchen Units	All kitchen units will be thoroughly checked and hinges replaced/adjusted where necessary. If adequate storage is not available (as per the standard kitchen spec), additional storage should be provided. The sink top earth connection will be secure. Damaged drawers and doors should be replaced, where possible. Damaged worktops as a result of burning/water ingress should be replaced where appropriate. If a connection has been made for a washing machine and it has not been sealed by the former tenant this will be discussed with the new tenant at the viewing. If they do not wish to reuse the connection, the pipe will be sealed. The cooker space will not be adjacent to the sink basin. If this is the case, steps will be taken to alter sink position. The kitchen should also be checked for mould growth. If greater than 5% appropriate works will be instructed to

	rectify. If the piecemeal work required to bring a kitchen up to standard is excessive then replacing the whole kitchen will be considered.
Kitchen vent	If a vent is installed in the kitchen, it will be checked for obvious signs of damage and wear.
Bathroom Suite	Bathroom suite will be checked for chips, cracks and should be securely attached to wall. Seal around bath will also be checked. The bathroom will also be checked for mould growth. If greater than 5% appropriate works will be instructed to rectify
Bathroom vent	Grille will be checked to ensure ventilating the space properly. If not, grille will be cleaned.
Shower Unit	Any instantaneous electric shower which has not been fitted by the Co-operative will be removed & re-tiling done as required.
Decoration	The Co-operative is generally not responsible for the condition/level of decoration in a property. However, where the condition of the decoration is deemed to be so bad as to affect the likelihood of anyone accepting the property or the decoration is offensive (i.e., graffiti) then minimum decoration will be completed.
Energy Performance	Each void will be inspected to determine whether and Energy Performance Assessment has been carried out. If it has and certificate not displayed, a duplicate will be printed and displayed. If no EPC is available, an Energy Assessment should be instructed

Equalities Impact Assessment

Name of Policy to be assessed	Void Management Policy	New policy or revision of existing?	Review
Person(s) responsible for assessment		Head of Housing Services	
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy.	The policy sets out how WWHC manages turnover of vacant properties with a view to completion of repair works whilst seeking to minimise rent loss.		
Who is intended to benefit from the policy? (EG applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)	Tenants and applicants		
What outcomes are wanted from this policy? (EG the measurable changes or benefits to members/ tenants / staff)	<p>Effective management of stock to minimise void times and maximise income. Efficient turnover of stock allows us to meet customer expectations.</p> <p>The policy and procedures explicitly outline our processes.</p>		
Which groups could be affected by the policy? (note all that apply)			
Race	x	Gender	
Sexual orientation		Gender reassignment	
Age	x	Religion or belief	x
Marital status		Disability	x
Pregnant and Maternity			
If the policy is not relevant to any of the equality groups listed above, state why and end the process here.			
N/A			

Have those affected by the policy / decision been involved?		
N/a – update of policy.		
Describe the likely positive or negative impact(s) that the policy could have on the groups identified above.	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
	Priority is given to appropriate applicants when adapted properties are identified.	
What actions are required to address the impacts arising from this assessment? (This might include: additional data, putting monitoring in place, making adjustments, taking specific action to mitigate any potentially negative impacts)	Information is available in other formats and languages where required. Interpreters are used in all instances where language barriers are identified.	

Signed: Nicola Carrigan

Job Title: Head of Housing Services

Date: 26 January 2026