

Void Management Policy

Policy Statement

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the associations position on the management of empty properties (voids), ensuring we manage the process of repairing and reletting of void properties in the minimal amount of time, to the association's lettable standard and to establish a structured approach for inspecting void properties.

This policy aims to ensure quality control, compliance with safety standards, and efficiency in the void turnaround process.

Legal Obligations

As the landlord under Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, we have a duty to ensure all properties meet the Decent Homes Standard. This standard sets out minimum criteria for housing quality that includes safety, repair standards, and facilities. Ensuring that void properties meet these standards before re-letting is a key responsibility.

Relevant legislation includes:

- The Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 2004
- The Housing and Planning Act 2016
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Decent Homes Standard
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Environment Protection Act 1990
- Equality Act 2010
- Gas safety (Installation and use) regulations 1998
- Gas Safety (Management) regulations 1996
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Electrical Safety Regulations 2020
- Energy Performance Certification (EPC)

Orwell's Commitment

This policy sets out our commitment to deliver high quality homes and services for our customers, and to ensure we keep our homes in the best possible condition. Tenants are safe in their home and have good quality homes and neighborhoods to live in.

Orwell Housing Association is committed to maintaining high standards in property void management, ensuring that all void properties are thoroughly inspected prior to letting and to uphold safety and quality.

To achieve this, we will:

- Be efficient and proactive in fulfilling our legal obligations as a landlord relating to void management.
- Ensure that tenants fulfil their legal obligations in relation to their tenancy agreement.
- Provide a clear statement of the level of service and standards to which the association will work and ensure that properties allocated meet our lettable standard maximising the prospects of the incoming tenant sustaining a tenancy and reducing the likelihood of a tenant terminating the tenancy because of the property condition itself.
- Ensure properties are well maintained, safe, secure and in line with the Housing Quality Standard.
- Ensure properties are warm, insulated, fuel efficient and compliant with the energy efficiency standard for social housing (ESSH)
- Accelerate void turnaround and to re-let vacant properties as quickly as possible minimising void rent loss.
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained so that they are equipped to carry out the roles expected of them.
- Ensure management of the void process is efficient and effective with appropriate records and IT systems being maintained at each stage in the void management process.
- Keep tenants informed during the void management process ensuring good clear communication.
- In certain circumstances, agree to allow a property to be occupied while essential works are carried out, provided we have obtained explicit permission from the customer. This arrangement will be considered only for projects classified as high priority by the customer.
- Monitor and review void management processes and intervene as appropriate.
- Optimise customer satisfaction with delivery service; and delivering value for money.