



Craigdale
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

VOID MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Craigdale Housing Association can provide this document on request, in different languages and formats, including Braille and audio formats.

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1. Introduction

- Turnover of housing stock is an integral part of Craigdale Housing Association's (CHA) housing provision which inevitably results in period where properties are void. CHA understands good management of void properties and limitation of void periods is vital to maximise rental income, provide a quality service, meet housing need, and achieve good estate management.
- The main purpose of this Policy is to give guidance on compliance with the legal and regulatory frameworks within voids must be managed, and then to provide guidance on voids policy and practice.

2. Aims & Objectives

The Association will seek to minimise the time that a property is left empty recognising that an empty home is associated with:

- minimising void rental loss, void periods, and void repair costs.
- ensuring that tenants are fully aware of their tenancy obligations in relations to giving notice of tenancy ends and the condition in which the property must be left.
- bringing void properties to a lettable standard as quickly as possible.
- having systems in place for the prompt re-letting of void properties.
- complying with legal duties, regulatory requirements and good practice standards.

3. Expected Outcomes

Key outcomes of operating an effective Void Management Policy include:

- Ensuring that properties are well maintained, safe, secure and in line with the SHQS;
- Ensuring that properties are warm, insulated, fuel efficient and compliant with EESSH;
- Optimising customer satisfaction with services delivery; and
- Delivering value for money

4. Legislative Framework and Regulation Requirements

This Policy is intended to ensure that the Association meets the requirements of the following legislation and regulation:

- The Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001, 2010 and 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Energy Performance of Building (Scotland) Regulations 2008
- Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Amendment Regulations 2018
- Awaab Law October 2025

We are regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). Their Regulatory Framework sets out seven Standards of Governance and Financial Managements.

Relevant to this Policy are elements under Standards:

- **Standard 1:** The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
- **Standard 2:** The RSL is open about and accountable for that it does. It understands and takes into account of the needs and priorities of it's tenants, service users and stakeholders. It's primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.
- **Standard 3:** The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.
- **Standard 4:** The governing body bases it decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Charter sets out the standards and the outcomes for all social landlords when performing their wide range of activities. The Association will comply with the following Scottish Social Housing Charter requirements most relevant to this policy:

Outcome 1: Equalities "Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services".

Outcome 4 – Quality of housing "Tenants homes as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standards by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair"

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

Outcome 11: Tenancy Sustainment “Tenants homes are well maintained with repairs and improvements carried out when requires and customers are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

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”

5. Tenancy End by Formal Notification

Craigdale Housing Association ensures that tenants are fully aware of their responsibilities relating to leaving their property:

- End of tenancy details will be provided in the tenancy agreement and explained to the incoming tenant when signing the tenancy agreement. The end of tenancy procedure will also be outlined in the tenant's calendar and periodically in the Associations newsletters/website.
- The requirement to give 28 days' notice in writing is emphasised. It is clearly stated in the tenancy agreement that full rent will be charged until formal notice has been received and the notice period has elapsed, and that Craigdale will pursue outstanding arrears in such cases.
- Information will be provided to the tenant confirming the correct procedure that should be followed to meet the contractual obligations of the tenancy agreement.
- Housing Services Staff will arrange to visit the property during the notice period to assess the repair and decoration standard and discuss any other matters relating to the tenancy such as the rent account or qualification to the Right to Repair Compensation Scheme.
- Outgoing tenants will always be encouraged to provide forwarding contact details in the event that the Association requires getting in touch once their tenancy has ended.
- The process to reallocate a property begins as soon as termination notification is received. Housing Services Staff will arrange with outgoing tenant an accompanied viewing of the property with prospective tenants.
- Craigdale has the right to recharge outgoing tenants for any repairs which are due to tenant damage or neglect in such cases the tenant will be advised in writing of the work requiring to be done to a professional standard and the available time for the work to be completed by the tenancy termination.

6. Tenancy End by Abandonment

From time to time, tenants leave their home with no intention of returning and fail to advise the Association. This is known as abandoning a property. The Association has a separate procedure on abandonment to provide guidance to staff on how to deal with such situations.

A property is abandoned where:

- The house is unoccupied; and
- The tenant does not intend to occupy it as their principal home.
- The tenant has not followed the termination process as stated in their tenancy agreement.

7. Tenancy End by Death of a Tenant

- Where a tenant dies leaving no successors to the tenancy, Craigdale will allow the relatives up to 28 days from date of tenant's death to clear the property and return the keys.
- The tenancy will officially end upon the date of death of the tenant. Rights to housing costs entitlements will also end on the date of death. The Association has the discretion to claim the tenant's estate for the period in which the clear out of the property takes place.
- In the majority of tenants' deaths, the Association is generally advised of the death by the next of kin who takes responsibility for all necessary arrangements. The person responsible for the tenants' affairs will be asked to produce a death certificate to establish the date of the tenancy end and the identity of the deceased.
- The next of kin normally arranges to clear the property of furniture and personal effects. The Association has the discretion to assist by clearing out items of furniture where disposal is requested.
- In the event of no next of kin coming forward, the Association will try and find a next of kin. The Association may contact other organisations such as Police Scotland.
- If no next of kin can be identified, Police Scotland will liaise with the Local Authority in the first instance.
- In the case of sudden, suspicious, accidental or unexplained death the Association will need to liaise with the Procurator Fiscal and / or next of kin.

- The Association needs a copy of the death certificate to end a tenancy. If there is no next of kin, close liaison is required with Police Scotland.

8. Tenancy End by Eviction

The process for eviction is dealt with under the Association's policy and procedures. The tenancy termination date is the date that an actual eviction takes place.

9. Other Tenancy Terminations

There are some circumstances where tenancy terminations will not result in properties being classified as void. These are detailed below, and the processing of such tenancy ends will be dealt with under their own individual policies and procedures.

- Mutual Exchange
- Assignment / Sub Letting
- Succession
- Joint to single tenancies/single to joint tenancies.

10. Managing Voids

- The Association manages its voids in a way that ensures the property is in a good condition for letting and maximises the Association's rental income by minimising the void period. We work efficiently to carry out repair works and identify potential new tenants within the shortest possible timescales.
- We will if necessary, arrange security to be installed once void, or take other precautionary safety measures, if a property is deemed at risk.
- If keys are not returned in line with the tenancy termination date, rent will be charged until the keys are handed in or the Association is forced to gain access. Legal advice will be sought in these cases.
- Assess the quality of the decoration of the void property and establish any potential entitlement to assist the new tenant with decoration. Craigdale may offer a redecoration allowance voucher to assist the new tenant to bring the property up to a reasonable standard. If the decoration of the void property results in a refusal or the new tenant is unable to carry out the decoration, then the Associations contractor will be instructed to decorate the property.
- Ensure every prospective tenant is issued with a copy of the tenancy agreement before they make a decision on whether or not to accept the offer of a tenancy.

- Carry out weekly visual inspections of the exterior of the property during the void period.
- Pre allocate the property.
- Carry out accompanied viewings.

11. Allocation of Void Properties

We will generally commence the allocation process as soon as we have formal notification of a void property. The selection of potential tenants and allocation of properties will be carried out in accordance with the Associations Allocation Policy. New tenants will be liable for rental payments from their date of entry and the property will be habitable from that date.

Housing Services staff will carry out a settling in visit within 4-6 weeks from the tenancy start date to ensure the void property is fully occupied and deal with any tenancy issues that have arisen.

12. Lettable Standards

Our lettable standards are:

- To let the house in an acceptable standard in terms of repair and decoration.
- To have a full gas safety check undertaken and compliance certificate issued to new tenant, copy to Craigdale.
- The smoke alarm(s) should be tested as part of the gas safety check.
- All electrics must be checked, and a certificate of inspection issued to new tenant, copy to Craigdale
- Up to date EPC and copy of certificate issued to new tenant, copy to Craigdale
- All repairs will be completed before the property is let.
- Minimal repairs can be carried out once the tenant has signed for the tenancy.
- All windows should be fully operational and checked for safety. Window keys, if possible, should be issued to tenants where we have fitted locks.
- Front and Back door locks to be changed, doors checked for security and drafts. All pass doors should be intact and operating properly. Living room and kitchen doors should have door-closers. Bathroom doors should have a locking device.

- The house will be cleared of furniture, carpets, and personal belongings and rubbish from the previous tenant. If the new tenant wishes to keep any of the outgoing tenants items (within reason) such as, floor coverings, blinds etc a declaration will be signed at the time of sign up for these now becoming their responsibility.

13. Managing Performance

Quarterly reports are presented to the Audit & Assurance Committee will include but are not limited to details on the following:

- Rent lost due to void properties - Target 1.0%
- Turnover of stock and number of lettable voids.
- Refusal of properties.
- Average re-let times of void properties – Target 10 days

14. Complaints

We have a separate complaints policy and procedure. Leaflets and copies of the complaint's procedure are available from the Association's office and on our website. We also provide information on how our customers can make a complaint to the SPSO, Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS, telephone 0800 377 7300 or 0131 225 5300.

15. Equalities and Human Rights

We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity, including working towards a Board and staff team that is representative of the communities it serves in respect of Protecting Characteristics.

16. Freedom of Information (FOI)

The Association is subject to FOI and all enquiries with respect to Void Management Policy will be handled strictly in line with FOI and confidentiality policies.

17. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The organisation will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current GDPR regulations and our own policy.

18. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years or in light of changes to legislation.