

# LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

## VOID MANAGEMENT POLICY

### 1. AIMS

Langstane Housing Association is committed to ensuring that the turnover of housing stock is managed in such a way as to maximise rental income, meet housing need and maintain good estate management.

The Association aims to integrate issues of Equality and Diversity into all areas of operation, and the void management policy covers several activities. It is important that all customers are treated equally and sensitively in the allocation of properties, and that all services are adaptable to meet the varying needs of the customer base.

The Association is also committed to providing a safe environment with the protection of incoming tenants' and staff safety of utmost importance.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

- To ensure applicants are housed without unnecessary delay
- To minimise void rental loss
- To minimise void repair costs
- To minimise end of tenancy generated arrears
- To provide a safe environment for tenants and staff
- To work with statutory and voluntary agencies to minimise void periods
- To develop minimum lettable standards

### 3. PROCEDURES

The Association will ensure that procedures are in place to identify as early as possible when a property will become void and, once void, that the property is prepared to, at least, the minimum lettable standard within an agreed time frame.

The turnaround target is reviewed on an annual basis, details of which can be found in the Business Plan.

Void Management Procedures will inform, and be informed by, Allocations Procedures and Maintenance Repair Procedures.

Procedures to be followed by staff are held both on paper and computer format. The tenants' responsibilities and rights in relation to ending the tenancy are clearly stated in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenants Handbook. The tenants' responsibilities with regard to rechargeable repairs are clearly specified in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenants Handbook.

The tenants Right to Compensation for Improvements is available on the web site in leaflet form and in the Tenants Handbook. Leaflets are available on request.

#### 4. STAFF RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Policy is implemented by specialist voids staff within the Property Services Team

Training includes:

- Regular ongoing training in the legal framework affecting void management.
- Appropriate IT skills
- Repairs Reporting skills
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Maintenance inspection and reporting for non-technical staff

Staff are encouraged to study for formal qualifications, for example –

- Chartered Institute of Housing
- Higher National Certificate/Higher National Diploma
- Scottish Vocational Qualifications

#### 5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Void Management process is monitored weekly by supervisory staff and managers, and includes the following;

- Number of voids, and their status including the number of days the property has been in each void phase
- Nature of Tenancy termination, and number of properties returned in lettable condition
- Offer refusal rates and reasons, and action taken in response to refusals
- Void turnaround times, highlighting any issues such as contractor or DLO delays, and the number of voids requiring major works
- Voids as a percentage of total stock
- Cost of works, and average cost per void

Reports are made on a monthly basis to the Director of Customer Services and to each cycle of the Tenants Services Sub-committee and the Committee of Management.

#### *Right to Complain*

*In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of our Complaints Policy, which can also be viewed on our website.*

Approved by Tenants' Services Sub Committee:

31 July 2009

Review Date:

3 Years