



Policy: **Empty Homes (Void) Management Policy**

Approved by: **Leadership Group**

Date Approved: 07 March 2023

Last Review: New 2023

POLICY STATEMENT:

Broadland Housing Association (BHA) is committed to providing an efficient and effective empty homes (void) management service which delivers a good quality service to its tenants and meets legal and regulatory obligations.

SCOPE:

- Deliver an efficient, effective and value for money empty homes (void) service that meets the needs of our tenants - best standard with resources available.
- Comply with all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements and meet our contractual obligations.
- Ensure that all tenants move into a safe and secure environment.
- Work in partnership with our tenants to continuously drive service improvement.
- Agree ways in which we can improve the value for money of the service including the delivery of planned and programmed works to manage the demand on our responsive repairs service.
- Meet decent home standards and empty homes (void) specification.

(BHA Void Procedure gives a detailed account of how this Policy will be implemented.)

KEY STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

Leadership Group, Board

Leadership Group are responsible for approving policy and monitoring the performance on a regular basis.

Senior Managers

Ensuring that the Board's decisions are implemented in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements, Senior managers will also ensure that the policy is adhered to and will monitor performance.

Staff

Ensure that Policy decision and procedures are followed. Any queries from the tenants are dealt with in a timely manner.

Policy Name: Void Policy
Latest Review: New 2023

Review by: Jack Harvey, Local Delivery Manager
Verified by: Assistance Maintenance Director

Key Staff Roles

BHA employs four Local Delivery Maintenance Managers (LDMM), of whom have specific roles in dealing with our empty homes (void) management. There is also oversight by a Local Delivery Manager whom empty homes (voids) is their specialism to review performance and implement any improvements to the process.

BHA also employs Neighbourhood Officers across the geographical area who complete viewings and sign ups to the empty homes, they work closely with the LDMM's to ensure the standard of work set out in the Lettable Standard is adhered to.

DEFINITIONS:

For this policy, the following definitions apply:

Repair - The process of rectifying a component or installation in a Broadland owned and/or managed property for which it is responsible when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair.

Maintenance - The upkeep of components or installations in a Broadland owned and/or managed property for which it is responsible.

Empty homes (void) – Property that is vacant awaiting remedial works to bring to Broadland's letting standard before becoming available for relet.

RELVANT KEY LEGISLATION AND RELATED DOCUMENTS: (not limited to)

Legislation	Documents
Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 Electrical Safety Regulations 18 th Edition (IBS7671 Wiring Regulations) RSH Regulatory Standards Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006	Corporate Strategy Asset Management Strategy Electrical Policy Responsive Repairs Policy & Procedure Gas Policy Complaints Policy Compensation Policy Tenancy Agreement Recharge Policy Asbestos Policy & Procedure Aids & Adaptations Policy & Procedure Homes for Cathy Commitments Resident Involvement Strategy Allocations Policy Mutual Exchange Policy Safeguarding Policy Domestic Abuse Policy Empty Homes (Void) Lettable Standard

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EIA – EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

DATA PROTECTION

This policy (and associated procedures) does not involve the use of any personal data and so a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) has not been undertaken.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES:

- This Policy will apply to all buildings in BHA's full ownership and to all individuals employed and/or engaged by BHA. It covers all aspects of the empty homes (void) management service affecting re-lets delivered by BHA and its partners, contractors, or other agencies at times.
- BHA to ensure the property is safe and secure, we will carry out regulatory checks such as Electrical, Gas and Fire.
- To ensure that properties let by BHA meet acceptable standards.
- To ensure that rent loss through empty housing is minimised.
- To ensure BHA makes the most effective use of the housing resources available to it, to meet housing need.
- To let properties to a standard which maximises the prospects of the incoming tenant sustaining the tenancy.
- Provide a clear statement of the level of service and standards to which the BHA will work by providing all new tenants a lettable standard document so they can see what they should expect when they move into their new home, this can also be found on our website.
- Have procedures and agreed practices that are consistently applied across the service.
- Re-let vacant properties as quickly as possible, recognising that there are people waiting to be housed.
- Undertake repairs of empty properties in accordance with BHA's empty homes (void) letting standard and statutory responsibilities.
- Ensure that the condition of the property is of a standard that will not normally lead to an offer of accommodation being refused.
- Record actions and decisions taken at each stage in the void management process.
- Keep customers informed during the empty homes (void) management process.
- BHA will hold tenants to account for the condition they leave their home in and will chase any former tenant recharges due to damage or neglect.
- Ensure that communication with customers is in plain English with contact details for the relevant staff member in case of any queries.
- We ensure that any homes let to someone from a homelessness background are of a sufficient standard/basic furnishing to allow them to move in