

VOIDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy describes how Imani will manage empty properties to ensure a swift turnaround of empty properties and minimise void loss.

1.2 Imani believes that the quality of its void management is of great importance not only to ensure the satisfaction of new tenants but also to protect the value of its stock and other properties.

1.3 Imani recognises it has an important role to play in the communities we operate by ensuring voids are identified early, re-serviced cost effectively and re-let swiftly to reduce and meet the housing needs of homeless households and households in unsuitable accommodation.

2.0 Legal Framework

2.1 The Housing Corporation expects all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to comply with its Regulatory Code. RSL's are expected to;

- Develop and manage good quality homes that seeks to meets peoples needs and preferences now and in the future
- Homes are well maintained and in a lettable condition
- Maintenance is carried out effectively and responsively and in a way that reflects residents preferences

2.2 Guidance

- KLOE 5 – Tenancy and Estate Management
- KLOE 3 – Stock Investment and Asset Management
- CRE code of practice on racial equality in housing 2006
- Chartered institute of Housing Good Practice Briefing (2001) sustainable lettings

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Imani is committed to achieving high standards in its management of empty properties and will strive to meet the performance standard expected by the Housing Corporation.

3.2 Imani will seek to minimise the number of days a property remains empty by ensuring pre-termination procedures are effective and communicated effectively with outgoing tenants to ensure they understand their responsibilities prior to terminating a tenancy.

4.0 Implementation

4.1 Imani will continue to meet housing needs and will maximise rental income by giving high priority to repairing and letting empty properties to a high standard and to strict timescales.

4.2 Imani has developed a 'lettable standard' to ensure that homes available for lettings meet a set quality standard. The lettings standard will continue to be reviewed by measuring tenant's satisfaction with the condition of their home.

4.3 Imani will implement procedures which incorporate;

- a. Early and prompt identification of voids
- b. Pre-void inspections on receipt of notification of termination
- c. Ensuring the tenancy is legally determined
- d. Prompt issue of re-servicing works to bring the property up to Imani's 'letting standards'
- e. Pre-letting of properties where possible to minimise void loss and ensure prospective tenants are rehoused quicker.
- f. Where appropriate, carrying out non-essential non-urgent void works within the first week of the new tenancy
- g. Recharging repairs to outgoing tenants where repairs are not due to normal wear and tear of fixture and fittings.
- h. Offer redecoration vouchers where appropriate
- i. Training staff in voids procedures and being clear about responsibilities for action involved in the voids management process.
- j. Keeping accurate and up to date information on systems to provide operational, management and performance data, when required.
- k. Procedures for the prevention of squatting and action to be taken when squatting occurs.
- l. Measure tenants satisfaction with the standard of their new home via a new tenant's satisfaction survey.

5.0 Responsibility

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that this policy is in place.

5.2 The Finance Officer is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy

5.3 The Finance Officer is also responsible for ensuring that staff involved in void management are trained

6.0 Consultation

6.1 This policy will be reviewed in consultation with residents at least once every two years.

7.0 Review and Board Approval

7.1 This policy will be reviewed once every two years taking account of any changes to legislation that may occur.

Person Responsible for the review of this policy:	Finance Officer
Date of this review:	November 2009
Date of Board approval:	January 2010
Date the next review is due:	November 2012