



VOID MANAGEMENT POLICY

**Effective from:
April 2024**

APPLICATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

The Charity is committed to ensuring that there is effective Void Management in place and that empty YMCA St Paul's Group properties are let efficiently and to a set standard.

The Policy applies to all legal entities within the Group. This Policy shall operate alongside YMCA's Strategic Plan and other policy documents.

1. OBJECTIVES

1.1 The specific objectives of this document are:

- ▶ to ensure that properties allocated by the Charity meet acceptable standards
- ▶ to ensure that rent loss through vacant housing is minimised
- ▶ to ensure that the Charity makes the most effective use of the housing resources available to it, to meet local housing need.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 Within the Charity's housing portfolio we have hostel accommodation, move on accommodation, shared houses and flats and two supported living properties providing care for adults with learning difficulties. Most have an element of support with the majority let on a license. Many of the Charity's buildings are staffed 24hrs and regular welfare room/property checks are being carried out on all properties.
- 2.2 The room checks assess the general condition of the property and any repairs required are raised at this time.
- 2.3 The majority of the Charity's work is with young and vulnerable people, as a result abandonment or lack of forward notice in vacating a property is unfortunately common.
- 2.4 We have an organisational target of a maximum rental void loss % of our annual rental income throughout the year. This target is set each year as part of the budgeting process. Within the overall %, local targets vary across the organisation from property to property and is dependent on commissioning and referral arrangements.

3. INSPECTIONS

- 3.1 Voids will be inspected at the earliest opportunity by the responsible officer at each location using the void property checklist. If notified, a pre inspection shall be carried out within 7 days of a termination notification or during the normal room inspections to discuss with the outgoing tenant the procedures relating to vacation.
- 3.2 The pre inspection shall determine if the void can be re-let immediately or requires repairs to bring it up to the association's standard. Properties that are abandoned or have no notice

given will be inspected as soon as they have been identified as empty. The housing officer will be notified of the expected completion date of the works.

- 3.3 The Charity also carries out rolling Property Condition & Compliance Inspections across all its properties. These measure compliance with Decent Homes Standard, where a property is deemed to be non-compliant, a resident is moved out whilst works to return the property to a compliant position is carried out.

4. LETTABLE STANDARD

- 4.1 The property shall be in a good clean tenantable condition in order to be re-let. The Charity shall from time to time vary standards of repair within void properties but a minimum standard is required which is defined as the *Lettable Standard*. Repairs will be ordered by the officer carrying out the inspection. The officer will also assess whether the works are required prior to a new resident moving in or can be done with the resident in occupation. The details of the inspection shall be noted in the void checklist. As a minimum all properties will be cleaned.
- 4.2 The following table is to be used as a guide to ensure the lettable standard is met. There will always be an element of officer decision dependent on the property. The key aim is to ensure the property is turned around as quickly as possible and we provide a safe and secure home which is clean for the incoming resident.

Component	Standard	Action if below standard	Can be done after resident Moves in
Door	Fire door and frame intact Working door closer Opens and closes easily Handles working Key/swipe card working	Repair/Replace Repair/Replace Repair/Replace Repair/Replace Replace	No No No No No
Belongings	Clean of personal belongings from previous tenant	Clear	No
Decoration	In good decorative order	Decorate/ Clean	Depends on How bad this is. Officer to decide.
Smoke Detector	Intact and working	Replace	No
Carpet	Clean, free of stains and vacuumed	Clean/Replace	Dependant on condition. Officer to decide.
Vinyl flooring	Intact, secure, level and free of trip or slip hazards	Repair/Replace	Dependant on condition. Officer to decide.
Heating	Adequate and safe form of heating No missing components	Replace Repair/ Replace	Dependant on the time of year, i.e. if summer can be done later.

Component	Standard	Action if below standard	Can be done after resident Moves in
Windows	Glazing intact Operates as designed Restrictors working as designed	Repair/Replace Repair/Replace Repair/Replace	No Depends on severity No
Kitchen units	Sink intact Taps intact No leaks Worktop without obvious burns, breaks or water blown Doors intact	Replace Replace Repair Replace Replace	No No No Depends on condition. Officer to decide. As above
Bath/shower room	Clean bathroom/shower suite Bath will be free of chips Tiling will be clean, intact (not loose) Grout and sealing intact Taps intact and working Water temperature ok (Hot and Cold) Seat secure and intact Cistern flushes Plugs intact Shower curtain clean and free from stains Extractor fan intact and working	Clean Repair/replace Repair Repair Repair/replace Repair Repair/Replace Repair/replace Replace Clean /replace Replace	No Depends on the severity No No No No No No No Yes Yes
Electrics	Visual inspection of electrics to include: Sockets Plugs Light fittings Light switches	Repair/Replace Replace Replace Replace Replace	No No No No No
Gas	All properties with individual heating will have an up to date Gas safe certificate	Service	No
Infestations	Bed Bugs Rodents Ants Cockroaches	Call pest control company	No
Cleanliness	All properties to be cleaned prior to resident moving in	Arrange clean	No

5. VOID CATEGORIES

5.1 The Charity categorises its voids as follows:

5.2 VOIDS READY TO LET

Waiting for referral: these rooms are ready to be let and are awaiting letting in line with the Charity's Lettings & Allocations Policy.

Block Booking/ E-bed: as above, however, the room is being paid for by another agency whilst we are awaiting for it to be let - no void loss is incurred on these voids.

5.3 VOIDS UNAVAILABLE TO LET

Waiting for cleaning/ delivery (Minor Works): Minor works voids are properties that are in good condition and need only some tidying up and a clean or awaiting the delivery of critical item such as a mattress.

Routine Repairs Needed (Normal Works): Normal works voids are properties that require an element of maintenance work however this can be carried out by in-house staff or some of the repairs required can be done after by external contractors after the resident moves in.

Major repairs needed (Major works): Major works voids are properties that require more substantial repair works that are likely to take more than 7 days to turn around. Major works also includes those properties where there are substantial works required e.g. structural works/ planned refurbishments etc.

6. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING

6.1 The Charity will monitor the following indicators:

- ▶ Number of voids in each category
- ▶ Void % of rooms available to let
- ▶ Actual void loss against target both in monetary value and as percentage (monthly to ET and quarterly to Performance Committee)

6.2 The Charity will use data and feedback to review and improve the way it manages voids.

6.3 Review of performance will be undertaken monthly by the Executive Team and findings reported to the Performance Committee on a quarterly basis.