

OPS001 - Abandoned Property Policy

MONITORING FORM	
Department	Housing
Department Director	Operations
This policy is applicable to	Housing
Author	Housing Manager
Date approved by board	5/6/2019
Date of last review	1/5/2019
Version number	V1
Date of minor modification	1/5/2019
Period of Review	3yrs
Date of next review	1/5/2022
Internal /external consultees (if required)	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Tenancy Agreement (section 6.4) gives Weslo Housing Management the right to enter properties which are unoccupied and where there are reasonable grounds to believe that it is abandoned in order that we can secure the property against vandalism and repossess the dwelling for future letting.

2. SCOPE

2.1 Our policy is to re-let properties as quickly as possible in order to minimise rent loss resulting from abandoned properties and to follow the guidance as detailed in the Scottish Secure Tenancy (Abandoned Property) Order 2002.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 The overall aim of this policy is to identify, repossess and relet properties as quickly as possible in order to minimise the rent loss resulting from abandoned properties. The specific objectives of this policy are to:

- make the best use of its housing stock by ensuring abandoned properties are able to be re-let quickly and minimise the time a property is unoccupied
- reduce estate management problems arising from an unoccupied property
- determine quickly whether a property is abandoned and minimise the potential rent loss
- minimise costs to Weslo e.g. of repairs, storing belongings etc.
- protect the rights of tenants and Weslo when repossessing a property

4. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

4.1 This Policy will always be carried out in accordance with Weslo's Policy of Equality & Diversity which aims to promote diversity, fairness, social justice and equality of opportunity by adopting and promoting fair policies and procedures.

5. PUBLICISING AND AVAILABILITY

5.1 This policy is available on the Weslo website, to Board and staff members and any other key stakeholders. Copies are available free of charge. A summary of this policy can be made available in other formats and languages.

6. MONITORING AND REPORTING

6.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with applicable legislative changes, changes within the organisation and best practice

An annual report will be provided to the Management Board on the following: -

- Number of tenancies terminated following abandonments
- Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year, by source of let
- Percentage of rent due lost through properties being empty during the last year
- Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year

7. COMPLAINTS

7.1 Anyone wishing to make a complaint about our services should do so using our Complaint Procedure.

Further information on how to make a complaint can be found at

<https://www.weslo-housing.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-make-a-complaint>

8. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

8.1 Related Policies and Procedures which compliments this policy include:

- Void Policy and procedures
- Complaints Policy and procedures
- Estate Management Policy and procedures
- Allocation Policy and procedures
- Equal Opportunities Policy and procedures
- Recharge Policy and Procedure

9. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GOOD PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS

9.1 The provisions and implementing of the Abandonment Policy aims to comply with the following legislation and statutory documents: -

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Scottish Secure Tenancy (Abandoned Property) Order 2002
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Scottish Secure and Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Equalities Act 2010

10. POLICY REVIEW

10.1 The Abandonment Policy will be reviewed every three years, unless recommended change is required through analysis of the abandonment process, feedback from tenants, or a change in legislation.