



Golden Lane Housing

Empty Homes policy

Last review date: July 2021



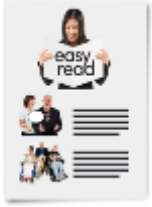
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1. What is an Empty Homes Policy?



This guide is a plain English summary of Golden Lane Housing's Empty Homes Policy.



The Empty Homes Policy is a paper that sets out what Golden Lane as a company wants to do with its empty properties so that the property is well looked after and a new tenant can move in as quickly as possible.



This paper looks at the time when a current tenant decides to move out up to a new tenant moving in. This includes the tenant moving out, checking for repairs and who pays for this, ordering the repair work, looking for new tenants and meeting with new tenants.



There are other policies that focus on making sure the property is in good condition and that it is safe when it is empty. These are called “Empty Homes minimum standards” Policy and “Compliance Standards”.



There is also a paper that tells you which department and person at Golden Lane does what part of our empty homes policy. This is called “Empty Homes – Housing management process.”

2. Mission, vision and values

Everything Golden Lane Housing does is to support our tenants and future tenants.



Our vision

We want a world where everyone with a learning disability can live in good quality housing that meets their needs.



Our mission

We want to help people with a learning disability find a quality home around which they can build their lives.



Our values

Inclusive – We are inclusive. People with a learning disability are at the heart of everything we do.

Trustworthy – We are trustworthy. Being open and honest in everything we do.



Caring – We are caring. We treat everyone with respect and kindness.

Challenge– We challenge. Working for real change and innovation to support housing opportunities.



Positive – We are positive. Optimistic for a better future and celebrate what we are proud of now.

3. What we want to do:



We want to:

- Make sure the properties we let are in good condition
- Make sure the property isn't empty long
- Talk to the leaving tenants early to make them aware of anything they need to pay for
- Make sure we don't have lots of empty properties
- Sell the property if nobody wants to live there



4. How we are going to do it

We have noted five main reasons why we get empty homes – these are:



- When a tenant gives us notice to leave
- When a tenant has died
- When a tenant transfers to another Golden Lane property
- When a tenant moves out but doesn't tell us (Abandonment)
- When we evict someone



It is important that we know this because this can change how we are able to do work on the property and how we might get referrals for a new tenant.



Each of the reasons above has its own way to end a tenancy and request work from the property team. You can request copies of these to see in detail how we will manage them.



Sometimes we may have empty homes that have not had a tenant for a year or more. We call these “low demand” properties.



We have lots of ideas on how to get these let but it often involves us doing extra repair or improvement work to the condition of the property or selling the house with an estate agent.

5. Visiting empty homes and making sure they are safe



When we visit an empty home, we want our staff to be safe so all our policies and procedures look at the safety of the person who will use them. For information on newly empty properties please see the “Empty Homes Standard” policy.

6. Working with other people



When we are looking to get a new tenant the best way to get someone who needs a new home is to speak to other professionals, this could be social services, different support providers or the commissioner for services in an area.



When we do this, we want our tenants to be involved in their move and to feel like they have a say. It also helps to fill the properties quickly and sets up good communication with support teams, local authorities, and tenants.



7. What happens if something goes wrong?

When there is a problem with moving in a new tenant, we will make sure the manager is aware of the issue and gets involved to stop it happening again. If it is a serious incident the Director of Housing will be made aware so that any problems that are caused because of Golden Lane can be looked at and changed.



8. Measuring how we are doing

On a monthly basis a report is done that looks at all empty homes and rooms that we have. This information is given to our leadership team so that they know where we have empty homes. We need to have this information available because it is a rule for all housing providers set out by the regulator of social housing.



9. Roles and responsibilities

Everyone at Golden Lane Housing must follow the rules in this policy to keep everyone safe and happy in their home



10. Keeping up to date with the Law

This policy will be updated with changes in the law or by the Regulator of Social Housing.

11. How this fits in Golden Lane Housing's plans



Quality services:

This policy is about how Golden Lane Housing offer tenancies, the types of tenancies we offer and how we make sure they last.



Healthy Business:

This policy helps Golden Lane Housing to keep growing, and to continue to deliver on our Board of Trustee's Vision and Mission.



New Homes:

This policy, and our Development plan helps us to provide a quality home that our tenants can build their lives around.