

Doc Number: 3-10a	Lead: Manager, Housing Services	Last Full Review: July 2026
Tick one of the below for review/changes made: Full review and changes made ☒ (add changes summary to table below) Full review, no changes made ☐ Changes made but no full review ☐ (add changes summary to table below)		Reviewer / Editor: Manager, Housing Services Changes Approved By: Manager, Housing Services Reviewed and edited in-line with the Beacon? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Abandonment Policy

Date	Summary of Changes Made
October 2023	All P&Ps revert to version 01 as approval process & version control moved to SharePoint. Version number no longer shown on the document. New front sheet
December 2025	Reviewed in line with Beacon. Role names updated
	Section 5 – take a photo of calling card and upload to tenant’s housing file Section 6 – Enquiries, in cases of welfare concerns, it will be Police who enter the property, not housing staff
July 2026	Separate Policy & Procedure. Responsibilities for housing team added

1.0 Purpose

To outline the process to be followed where there is reason to believe that a tenant is no longer occupying their property as their only or principal home, or that the tenancy has been abandoned.

2.0 Policy

We are committed to making the best use of our housing stock and ensuring accommodation is occupied by those who need it.

We will monitor suspected cases of non-occupation and take appropriate action to ensure properties are fully utilised and financial loss arising from rent arrears is minimised.

Where there is evidence that a property may have been abandoned, we will investigate thoroughly and take appropriate legal action where necessary to bring the tenancy to an end.

We will balance the need to return empty properties to use as quickly as possible with our obligation to follow the correct legal procedures and to prevent unlawful eviction.

We recognise that tenants may be absent from their homes for a variety of reasons, including hospitalisation, caring responsibilities, employment, family circumstances, imprisonment, or other personal situations. Each case will be considered individually and with regard to any known vulnerabilities or support needs.

A tenancy will not be considered abandoned solely because a tenant is absent from the property. To conclude that a property has been abandoned, we must be satisfied that:

- No person is occupying the property;
- The property is not being used as the tenant's only or principal home; and
- The tenant has no intention of returning to live at the property.

We must be able to demonstrate that reasonable enquiries have been made and that there are reasonable grounds to believe the tenant has permanently ceased to occupy the property as their home. The evidence gathered should be sufficient to support our decision should it be scrutinised by a court

3. Responsibilities

C-Suite	Overall accountability for the implementation of organisational policies
---------	--

Operational Performance Group	Responsible for: - Ensuring the organisation has appropriate policies, procedures, standard operating procedures (SOP) and guidelines in place for the safe and effective running of the business - Ensuring policies, procedures, SOPs and guidelines remain in date and holding owners to account where this is not the case - Overseeing the work of the Policies Group
Policies Group	Responsible for: - Reviewing new, or major revisions to policies and procedures - Ensuring the content is workable and proportionate - Supporting the author in implementation and communication - Ensuring policies and procedures align to the Beacon
Manager, Housing Services	- Ensuring the abandonment policy and procedures are implemented consistently and in accordance with relevant legislation and organisational requirements. - Providing advice, guidance and support to staff investigating suspected abandonment cases. - Reviewing evidence and authorising appropriate action, including legal proceedings where necessary. - Monitoring case management, safeguarding considerations, staff training and service performance to minimise the risk of unlawful eviction and support timely property recovery.
Housing Team	- Identifying, investigating and gathering evidence where a property is suspected to have been abandoned. - Making reasonable enquiries, including contacting tenants and relevant third parties, to establish whether the property remains the tenant's only or principal home. - Recording all actions, evidence, vulnerabilities, safeguarding concerns and mitigating circumstances throughout the investigation. - Carrying out procedural and legal requirements, referring cases for management approval where required, and arranging the securing and re-letting of properties following lawful recovery.