

M&G Affordable Living RP Limited (“MAL”)

Void Standard

Landlord: MAL Affordable Living RP Limited “MAL”

Version: MAL 1.0

Created: February 2026

Review: February 2028

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1. Our policy statement and objectives

To define the standards, timescales and processes MAL will apply to bring empty homes (“voids”) back into use safely, quickly, compliantly and cost-effectively, ensuring homes are clean, safe, lettable and meet our lettable standard at the point of sign-up (Affordable Rent) or sale/lease variation (Shared Ownership).

1. Safety first: Zero tolerance for non-compliance (gas, electrical, fire, water hygiene, asbestos, structural risks, damp & mould).
2. Speed: Minimise rent loss and vacancy periods while ensuring quality.
3. Quality: Deliver consistent lettable standards and a good first-impression.
4. Value for money: Use right-first-time scopes, batch procurement, and warranty leverage.
5. Customer experience: Clear communication, swift issue resolution, and inclusive standards.
6. Sustainability: Reduce waste, re-use components where safe, and improve energy performance where practicable.

2. Scope.

This policy applies to:

- Affordable Rent homes).
- Shared Ownership homes (voids arising from staircasing to 100%, lease surrender, repossession/forfeiture, re-sale nominations,).
- All pre-termination, termination, inspection, repair, safety, cleaning, and re-let/re-sale activities.

Exclusions: Market rent, market sale (unless buy-back converts to rented stock), temporary decants (managed by Decant Procedure). This struck through could be added to “Exclusion”

3. Definitions:

Void: A dwelling owned by MAL that is unoccupied and not generating rent (Affordable Rent) or where a shared ownership home returns to MAL for works/resale/.

Void Types:

- General Voids (standard)
- Major Works Voids (extensive repairs/compliance failures/catastrophic events)
- Shared Ownership Turnover (re-sale, surrender, forfeiture, buy-back)
- New-Build Handbacks (defect periods managed under build contracts)
- Lettable Standard: The minimum asset, safety, and presentation standard a home must meet at sign-up/assignment.

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4. Regulatory & Legal Compliance (Summary)

MAL will ensure their appointed managing agents will maintain processes to ensure the void standard and re-let/re-sale processes align with current law and regulation, including (not exhaustive):

- Landlord safety duties (gas, electrical, fire safety), water hygiene, asbestos, and housing fitness standards.
- Tenure-specific requirements for Shared Ownership leases (e.g., rent on unsold equity, service charge provisions, forfeiture where applicable), and Affordable rent setting and re-let practices under the prevailing rent policy and Regulator standards.
- Planning/Section 106 obligations for nomination, affordability, and tenure mix.

Note: Staff procedures include the latest legislative references and certificates required at handover. Where the law or regulator guidance changes, operational procedures will update immediately and this policy will be scheduled for early review.

5. Void categories & Target Timescales

Start point: Date keys received or legal possession obtained (whichever is later).

Stop point: Date the new resident signs (rent) or completion/lease assignment takes place (SO).

Void Type	Target	Notes
General Affordable Rent	≤ 14 days	Includes inspection, compliance, cleaning, minor works
Major Works	≤ 28 – 42 days	Structural, damp & mould remediation, complex compliance or component replacement
Supported / Sheltered	≤ 21 – 28 days	Allow for specialist adaptations or scheme-specific checks
Shared Ownership Re-sale (nomination window)	As per lease / s106	Typically 4–8 weeks to nominate; marketing to commence within 5 working days of decision
Shared Ownership Buy-back to Re-let (interim AR)	≤ 21 – 28 days	Only where permitted and viable; ensure rent policy and tenure conversion rules are followed

Local targets can be set above these minima where market or scheme-specific issues apply. All variances require manager approval and audit notes

6. Lettable Standard (Minimum Requirements)

Safety & Compliance

- **Gas safety:** Valid LGSR (12 months).
- **Electrical safety:** Valid EICR (max 5 years or per risk assessment); evidence of any remedials completed.
- **Smoke/Heat/CO alarms:** Installed, tested, positioned to current standards.
- **Water hygiene:** Risk-based controls (flushes, TMVs where specified, cold/hot temps), sentinel checks where applicable.
- **Asbestos:** Management survey status known and actions controlled; no ACM disturbance risks.
- **Fire safety:** Flat entrance doorsets (self-closing), fire stopping where works occurred, signage for blocks, FRA actions addressed where relevant to the dwelling.
- **Damp & Mould:** Home free from visible mould; root cause addressed (e.g., leaks, ventilation, insulation/cold bridging remedies); resident guidance provided.

7. Void Standard

- All compliance checks carried out and relevant certificates provided
- Professionally cleaned throughout
- A good standard of décor throughout
- Flooring provided and will be to a good standard- flooring to be assessed
- No belongings or rubbish left from the previous customer
- Gardens and external spaces that are clean and tidy and free from obstructions.

8. Empty Homes Repair and Maintenance

Inside the Home

- The locks to the front and any alternative main access doors (excluding patio doors) have been changed from the previous tenant
- A minimum of 3 sets of keys to be provided
- Electrical and gas safety checks completed and the supplies will be safe and in working order. A copy of the certificates to be issued to the new customer including the energy performance certificate (EPC)
- Smoke detectors checked and tested or installed where no detection currently exists
- CO2 and Heat Detectors will be checked and tested
- In the kitchen there will be an electric or gas cooker point
- Kitchen cupboards and drawers open and close freely, wall tiles are intact, grouted, sealed and clean
- There will be plumbing, an electrical socket, and space for a washing machine
- Any appliances will be clean and Electrical Safety checked and in good working order including extractor fans
- The bathroom suite is clean and in good working order
- A new shower curtain will be fitted or, where there is a shower screen, this will be checked and in good working order
- The W.C seat will have been replaced where necessary
- The shower head and hose will have been replaced where necessary
- Internal doors open and close properly
- Windows are checked and adjusted as necessary
- Window locks checked and keys provided where applicable
- Window restrictors will be in working order (where applicable)
- Floors are sound and free from defects/hazards
- The ceilings and walls are free from major visible defects
- Architraves and skirting boards are complete
- Staircases and handrails are safe
- All water appliances and systems are safe and in working order
- The roof space is clear and free of obstacles
- There is no visible damp or mould growth
- Any mobility adaptations are safe and in working order
- Vents are clear, allowing for the free flow of air, including storage heater vents
- Rooms are deodorised
- Windows and doors are secure, open and close freely with glazing intact.
- A good standard of décor (please ‘Decoration and Flooring standards’ below for guidance)
- Installed flooring throughout the property (please see ‘Decoration and Flooring standards’ below for guidance)

Outside the Home

- The structural fabric of the property and attached canopies and/or outhouses, including pointing and rendering are safe
- Keys provided for any outhouses or external storage
- The roof, gutters and downspouts are in good order
- Drainage systems and waste pipes are in working order
- Paths and paving are swept and safe
- Any external handrails and steps are safe
- Any existing fences, walls and gates are safe
- There is no rubbish left from the previous tenant & dustbins will be empty
- Gardens will be mowed & overgrown hedges, bushes and trees cut back although this work may be completed after a move in date as agreed with the customer

9. Cleaning Specification

The requirement of a clean and clear will be dependent on the individual empty home. All homes will have an essential clean as outlined below, and some homes may require a more specialist clean

Essential Clean

- The structural fabric of the property and attached canopies and/or outhouses, including pointing and rendering are safe
- Keys provided for any outhouses or external storage
- The roof, gutters and downspouts are in good order
- Drainage systems and waste pipes are in working order
- Paths and paving are swept and safe
- Any external handrails and steps are safe
- Any existing fences, walls and gates are safe
- There is no rubbish left from the previous tenant & dustbins will be empty
- Gardens will be mowed & overgrown hedges, bushes and trees cut back although this work may be completed after a move in date as agreed with the customer

Specialist Clean

In addition to an ‘Essential Clean’ there will be some circumstances where a more specialist or Environmental Clean is required, which may include, indication of pests or infestation, hazardous and clinical waste, drugs paraphernalia, smoke or nicotine damage.

10. Decoration & Flooring Standards

Standard of décor

We ask that décor is in good condition with neutral colour schemes. If the current decoration standard is of a high quality and no defects then this can remain, however if there are scuffs, tears in paper or a bold colour theme, please redecorate to a neutral colour theme. This can be assessed on room-by-room basis.

Any rooms with a bold pattern or decor should be returned to a neutral colour scheme

Any torn wallpaper to be removed and returned to a neutral colour scheme

Any good quality wallpaper that is free from defects and neutral can remain

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All homes will have installed flooring to all living areas, hallways and landings spaces, a guide below on flooring preference and possible colour choices;

Flooring

Room	Covering
Bathrooms and Cloakrooms	Non slip vinyl
Kitchens	Non slip vinyl
Living Room	Carpet or vinyl depending on the layout of the property for example; an open plan kitchen and living area may require vinyl type flooring
Hallway and Landings	Non slip vinyl
Bedrooms	Carpet

Any existing flooring needs to be assessed against the quality standards outlined in this guidance document. If the flooring is not of a good quality or has visible defects, then please replace following the guidance in this document.

For visible defects in the carpet such as furniture indentation, please make an assessment if this can be remedied by vacuuming and cleaning then we ask that the carpet is replaced.

For staining that cannot be removed by cleaning, we would ask that the carpet is replaced

Vinyl flooring can sometimes be installed in parts where a ‘spot repair’ of a certain part of defective flooring can remedy the defect.

If the vinyl flooring is ‘wearing’ or ‘tired’ in areas, we ask that the vinyl flooring is considered for spot repair, if this cannot be done to a good standard then we ask for this to be replaced

If the vinyl flooring is lifting or defective, and cannot be spot repaired or replaced, we would ask that the vinyl flooring is replaced

Where there are defects, including bubbling or lifting, we would ask that if this cannot be spot repaired the vinyl flooring is replaced.

Window Coverings

In certain homes where there are any bespoke shaped or overly large windows fitted blinds would have been provided.

We ask that blinds are checked for condition. If in good condition and defect free then these can be cleaned. We ask that any blinds that are not in a decent condition for example, heavily stained or damaged are replaced

11. Final Technical Checks

To ensure that all elements of the home are in good working order, we ask that all components are checked during the works process, including, but not limited to; door entry systems, any appliances that form part of the property, ventilation fans etc.

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Pre-Termination (Affordable Rent)

- **Notice handling:** Confirm vacation date, explain recharge policy, offer pre-exit visit.
- **Pre-exit visit:** Advise on cleaning, waste, keys, fixtures to remain; identify vulnerabilities to coordinate support.
- **Early marketing:** (where permitted) with photos and EPC rating.

Termination / Possession

Keys in / possession order date logged; meter readings taken; photographs; void category assigned; works order raised

Inspection & Scoping

- **Initial inspection** within 2 working days (AR) / 5 working days (SO).
- **Scope of works** using standard schedule rates; identify compliance tasks; request specialist surveys where needed (damp, asbestos).

Works Delivery

- Contractor mobilisation via approved framework; permits to work; site safety control.
- Progress checks at defined milestones; variations authorised per delegation matrix.

Final Sign-off

- Quality check by Asset Surveyor; verify certificates; complete void checklist; load documents to the property file.
- Handover to Lettings (AR) with sign-up pack or to Leasehold/Sales (SO) for marketing/nomination.

Re-let / Re-sale

- **Affordable Rent:** Affordability checks, offer, sign-up, key issue, 24-hour welcome call, 14-day follow-up repair sweep.
- **Shared Ownership:** Nomination/resale per lease/S106; valuation (RICS) where required; sales particulars prepared within 5 working days; legal pack compiled; exchange/completion monitored.

Rechargeable Repairs

Former tenants/leaseholders may be recharged for damage, unauthorised alterations, waste clearance and missed appointments, excluding fair wear and tear and where vulnerability or safeguarding factors apply. Recharge decisions are documented, evidenced (photos, invoices), and communicated with an appeal route.

Major & Complex Voids

Properties requiring significant investment (e.g., structural failure, extensive damp remediation, major component renewals, disrepair claims) are referred to the Void Panel for options appraisal: invest, convert tenure (if permitted), dispose, or temporarily mothball. All decisions must evidence safety, financial viability, and impact on housing need.

Damp & Mould (Zero-Tolerance Approach)

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All reported or visible damp and mould issues are treated as urgent health and safety. Root causes are identified (leaks/penetration, ventilation, thermal bridging), and permanent remedies applied. Residents receive clear guidance and a named contact for post-let follow-up.

Sustainability & Energy

Where practical within the void period and budget:

- Fit low-energy lighting, TRVs, basic draught-proofing.
- Replace end-of-life white goods with energy-efficient models (if provided).
- Provide EPC information and simple “operate your home efficiently” tips.

12. Compliance Checks

CP12 Gas Safety Certificate

Electrical Safety Certificate

13. Training & Competency

All staff and contractors involved in voids receive role-appropriate training (policy, H&S, damp & mould, safeguarding, data protection, and respectful customer service). Competence is tested annually.

14. Policy review

We will review this policy at least every two years to make sure it remains relevant and accurate, or more frequently where:

- Legislation, regulation or industry changes require otherwise, making sure that it continues to meet our aims and industry best practice.
- We identify any problems or failures in this policy or procedure as a result of customer, colleague or stakeholder feedback, complaints, or findings from an independent organisation.
- We become aware of any circumstances which may affect the content of this policy.

15. Version Control

Version.	Checked by.	Amendments.	Date of Approval.	Review date.
MAL Affordable Living Limited.	Director Fund Management	Policy adoption.	Feb. 2026	Feb 2028