1. **Introduction**

1.1 Orbit Living aims to deliver a high quality voids management service that both meets the needs and expectations of customers and represents value for money. This policy sets out the core principles to be adopted by Orbit Living to achieve the following aims;

- Minimise the number of empty homes
- Reduce the time taken to relet properties
- Minimise rent loss resulting from homes being empty
- Ensure that the relet of empty properties contribute to the development of sustainable communities

2. **Definition**

2.1 This policy relates to empty rented homes that are awaiting letting whilst identified repair works are carried out.

3. **Policy Statement**

3.1 Orbit Living will ensure that all legal and regulatory requirements in relation to the management of empty properties are met.

3.2 We will have a clear re-let standard in place supported by procedures which set out how we administer the management of empty homes awaiting letting, and the standard will be reviewed and agreed with customers, and clearly publicised.

3.3 We will seek the views of customers on the standard to which empty homes have been let to them through customer feedback and will seek insight of the customer experience through service review groups and other customer involved activities, including Moment of Truth surveys.

3.4 These results will influence improvements to the service offered where these have been identified and are achievable.
3.5 We will give consideration to the issue of security of empty homes and to the community and environmental impact of options such as security screening.

3.6 Where damage has been caused to the property by the outgoing tenant, or is due to lack of due care and attention, consideration will be given to recovery of these costs in accordance with the Orbit Living policy on rechargeable repairs.

3.7 Where a property is scheduled for planned maintenance works, consideration will be given to bringing these forward, where it is practical and feasible, to enable these to be completed whilst the property is empty to minimise the impact of such works on future customers.

3.8 Orbit Living will periodically review whether homes that become empty continue to contribute to the development of sustainable communities or whether other options need to be considered through their respective asset management strategies, such as redesign or disposal.

4. Equality and Diversity

4.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all our residents. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion / faith, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or any other grounds set out in our equality and diversity policy or legally protected characteristic.

4.2 Our aim is to ensure that policies and supporting procedures do not knowingly create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, directly or indirectly.

5. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

5.1 We will only share information in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 or relevant legislation.

6. Monitoring and Accountability

6.1 Managers will ensure this policy is promoted, understood and implemented by all relevant employees ensuring consideration is given to any implications arising from policy decisions.

6.2 Orbit Living will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and recommending policy changes to improve services and to reflect the changing external environment.

6.3 A fundamental review of this policy will be completed within a 2 year period.