

POLICY TITLE	Access to Property
POLICY NUMBER	JO/PO/10
AUTHOR	Steve Miller
DATE AGREED	Agreed March 2009 ®
REVIEW DATE	2012
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR REVIEW	Steve Miller

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Housing Act 1988 Section 16 implies a term into every tenancy agreement that the tenant shall afford to the Landlord reasonable access to carry out repairs.
- 1.2 In the interests of good housing management, all landlords from time to time will require access to residential properties occupied by its tenants.
- 1.3 Erimus and TVH's Tenancy Agreement also provides the Landlord with access to inspect the condition of tenants homes, provided reasonable notice is given.
- 1.4 Erimus and TVH is committed to periodic inspections of tenants' homes in order to provide them with high quality services in the management and maintenance of their homes.
- 1.5 In the past, home visits have tended to be more reactive than proactive. Consequently, there has been little consistency around collection of information on such visits.

2 REFERENCE MATERIAL

- 2.1 Erimus Housing's Access to Property Policy, May 2007, and; Housing Act 1988, Section 16.

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 There are no definitions required for this policy.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1 The introduction of annual property inspections will enable Erimus and TVH to:
- Provide an opportunity to positively engage with customers;
 - Update Erimus and TVH's customer profile information;
 - Promote engagement in involvement options, in order to drive service improvement;
 - Ensure that all Erimus and TVH tenants are complying with their tenancy agreement;
 - Assist access for investment work and improvement;
 - Allow important feedback from tenants, and identify, signpost and provide any necessary advice, information or support that may be required;
 - Help maintain and sustain Erimus and TVH's tenancies, assets and estates.
- 4.2 A housing officer will complete a Property Inspection Survey for each Erimus and TVH property inspected.
- 4.3 Tenants will be contacted one week before any visit and advised that a housing officer will be visiting to complete a Property Inspection Survey.
- 4.4 If the appointment time is not convenient, a more suitable time will be agreed.
- 4.5 All reasonable steps will be made to ensure access is gained to a property. However, in the event of no contact or refusal by a tenant to allow Erimus and TVH access for a Property Inspection Survey, the Landlord may take legal proceedings against the tenant to ensure compliance, through use of either an injunction where urgent access is required in the case of health and safety, or by serving a Notice of Intention to Seek Possession, whichever is appropriate.
- 4.6 Progress against targets will be monitored by the Area Housing Manager to ensure completion of visits by estate officers.
- 4.7 Collection of information from the Property Inspection Survey will be used to help drive service improvements.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 5.1 There is no adverse impact on equality and diversity.
- 5.2 This policy complies with the Group's Equality and Diversity Strategy and Policy.

6 CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Erimus and TVH will consult the Resident's Panel, Area Housing Forums, Residents Associations and other recognised residents' groups, local voluntary and statutory agencies on a regular basis, in order to continually develop good practice in this policy area. Erimus and TVH will also give due regard to Good Practice Guidelines issued by the Housing Corporation, National Housing Federation and the Chartered Institute of Housing.
- 6.2 Staff groups involved in service delivery will also be consulted regularly to identify areas where services could be improved.

7 MONITORING AND REVIEW

7.1 Monitoring

- 7.1.1 Erimus and TVH will monitor and review the policy, associated procedures and staff training at regular intervals to ensure it continues to operate best practice, achieve measurable results and allow for continuous service improvement.

7.2 Review

- 7.2.1 The Policy will automatically be reviewed following policy or legislation change, as required by the Tenant Services Authority and Department for Communities and Local Government.
- 7.2.2 The Managing Director will be responsible for ensuring that policy reviews are undertaken.

8 RESPONSIBILITY

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the Managing Director and senior officers to ensure that:
- All staff are aware of Erimus Housing's policies;
 - All staff are trained on the policies;
 - Monitoring records are maintained in accordance with Erimus Housing's policies;
 - Customers are adequately informed of the policies;
 - Appropriate action is taken against employees whose actions are inconsistent with the Policy.