

COMMITTEE: Housing & Environment DATE: 25 May 2010

CORPORATE DIRECTOR: Pete Leonard

TITLE OF REPORT: Properties Removed from Charge

REPORT NUMBER: H&E/10/064

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The authority to grant retrospective approval for properties removed from charge was transferred from the Voids Sub-Group to the relevant Committee.

This report details properties that have been removed from charge and require retrospective permission.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- a) Note the return to charge of the properties detailed in TABLE 2 of the report.
- b) Note the current position of all off-charge properties detailed in Appendix 1
- c) Note the additional comments in respect of Woodend House, 254 Queens Road.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has made an allowance for rent loss due to unoccupied properties in its budget process. Properties removed from charge would be factored into those calculations during any period that they are off charge or unoccupied. This would be the same for properties returned to charge until the properties are actually let.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

This report is in line with the Council's key aims to improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6. REPORT

a) Housing SPI - Indicator 2:

This indicator reports on the total annual rent loss due to voids expressed as a percentage of the total rent due in the year.

Definitions

'Total amount of rent due in the year' is the total annual charges levied by the council in respect of rent and services for the housing stock held on the HRA that are available for let.

No deductions are to be made for housing benefit or rent written off.

A 'Void' is any house held on the HRA, which has no tenant for any period of time. A property may be counted as a void on one or more occasions during the year.

For this indicator, voids exclude:

- Empty properties subject to a Housing Committee decision that they are not to be let because they are surplus to long-term requirements, or to be transferred, disposed of or demolished.
- Empty properties where an insurance claim was raised due to fire or flood damage.
- Empty properties awaiting or undergoing major structural works (e.g. modernisation) during which period it would be unsafe for them to be occupied.
- Houses held for decanting tenants.
- Lock-ups and garages.

Authorisation

The Area Housing Teams were instructed to remove from charge any properties that met the required criteria and to seek retrospective approval from the former Voids Sub-Group. This included the reason for removal from charge and the anticipated date for return from charge. The retrospective approval was transferred from the Voids Sub-Group to the relative Neighbourhood Committee.

Properties removed from charge requiring retrospective approval.

The following properties have been removed from charge and currently remain off charge at this time.

N/a

In addition the following properties have also been removed from charge or were previously removed from charge and the remedial works have been completed and the charge re-instated. Retrospective permission is required for those properties where the retrospective permission had not previously been obtained.

TABLE 2:

Address	Date Removed	Reason	Date returned	Status
101f Menzies Road	29/11/09	Dry Rot	1/4/10	LET
38b Menzies Road	2/3/09	Dry Rot	8/4/10	Under Offer
29 Hollybank Place	14/1/07	Property refurbished	8/4/10	LET
5 Byron Park	26/2/07	Amenity Upgrade	29/3/10	LET
6 Byron Park	6/7/09	Amenity Upgrade	29/3/10	LET
52 Byron Crescent	4/5/09	Amenity Upgrade	29/3/10	LET
1 Regensburg Court	12/12/05	Ex Wardens property	22/3/10	LET
5 Regensburg Court	23/1/06	Ex Wardens property	29/3/10	LET
8b Granton Place	12/10/09	Dry Rot	10/05/10	LET

Woodend House, 254 Queens Road

This property was previously let as a Womens Shelter to Aberdeen Womens Aid. The service provider decided to no longer continue with the service and ceased to provide the service resulting in the property being vacated. The property was unsuitable to be let as mainstream accommodation in its current condition and layout and would require significant upgrading before this could be achieved. There was and still is a need to provide this type of service and Committee approved that a new provider should be commissioned. The procurement requirements are currently being undertaken and are at an advanced stage. However, there are still a number of legal and practical requirements before a new service provider can be appointed and the service re-commence. It is expected that new service provider can be appointed and contract in place in August although it is anticipated that the service would not commence for a further 3 - 6 months depending on the appointed service provider's need for any recruitment, registration or other requirements.

The property would also be subject to HMO licensing although this is not expected to delay the process.

7. AUTHORISED SIGNATURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Leonard', with a large, stylized initial 'P'.

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8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None