



Forced Access Policy

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Last Reviewed: July 2026

Version: 1.0

Approval body	Group Governing Body
Date of approval	August 2026
Date of next Policy review	August 2029
Customer engagement required	No
Your Voice engagement required	No
Equality Impact Initial Assessment	Yes
Full Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Data Protection Risks Assessed	Yes
Health and Safety Risks Assessed	Yes
Sustainability Impacts Assessed	Yes
Procedures Updated	Ongoing
Date Procedures Last Reviewed	n/a
Data Impacts / IT System Changes Assessed	n/a
Training Needs Assessed	Ongoing
Previous Policy Version	n/a
New Policy Version	Version 1.0

Equality Impact Initial Assessment

1. People responsible for carrying out this assessment	
Policy Owner:	Head of Investment & Sustainability
EQIA Assessor(s):	Head of Investment & Sustainability, Governance Officer
Name of Policy:	Forced Access Policy
Date of last EQIA:	n/a – New Policy
2. Purpose, aim(s) and expected outcomes (including who will benefit):	
The purpose of the Forced Access Policy is to establish a clear and consistent framework for gaining access to residents' homes where access is required to undertake statutory safety inspections, servicing, testing, associated remedial works and emergency safety works, and voluntary access has not been provided. The policy aims to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants, residents, employees, contractors and members of the public while ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory obligations. The policy seeks to balance safety requirements with residents' rights to privacy, dignity and peaceful enjoyment of their homes. Benefits will be realised by tenants, residents, neighbouring households, employees and the wider organisation through improved safety assurance and regulatory Compliance.	
3. Is there a direct impact on people, or how the service is delivered?	
Yes. The policy directly impacts tenants and residents where access is required to carry out statutory safety inspections, compliance checks, remedial works or emergency works. It establishes a formal process for obtaining access, including circumstances where forced access may be required as a last resort. The policy will support consistent service delivery, improve safety compliance, and ensure risks to residents and neighbouring properties are managed appropriately.	
4. Potential impact on diverse communities, customers or groups?	
The policy may have a greater impact on: • Older people who may require additional support to understand communications or arrange appointments. • Disabled residents, including those with physical, sensory, cognitive or mental health conditions. • Residents whose first language is not English. • Residents with caring responsibilities who may have difficulty providing access during standard working hours. • Vulnerable residents who require additional assistance to engage with the access process. The policy recognises the need to identify vulnerabilities and take account of equality and human rights considerations when making decisions regarding access. Additional support and reasonable adjustments may therefore be required in some cases.	

5. Is there a Positive or Negative impact?			
Positive	☒	Which groups does it impact?	There is both a positive, and a low-risk negative impact. Positive: All tenants and residents through improved safety, compliance, property condition and risk management. Older people, disabled residents and vulnerable households through enhanced protection from safety risks. Neutral/Low Risk – Negative: Residents who experience barriers to communication, disability, language barriers or other vulnerabilities if reasonable adjustments are not made. These impacts can be mitigated through appropriate support and engagement.
Negative	☒		
Neutral	☐		
6. Details of any engagement activities carried out			
No specific customer consultation has been undertaken as part of the development of this policy. The policy has been developed in response to statutory compliance obligations, health and safety requirements, tenancy agreement provisions and good practice guidance relating to tenant safety and access arrangements. Operational teams and subject matter experts have been involved in the development of the policy.			
7. Overall Impact Rating			
Material impact		Non-material impact ☒	
8. Initial Assessment Findings and Recommendation			
Initial Assessment Only		Full EQIA Required ☒	
9. Reason(s) for Recommendation			
The initial assessment identifies the potential for the policy to have a greater impact on specific groups of customers, therefore a full EQIA is required.			
Date of Initial Assessment		July 2026	

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Policy

The Caledonia Group comprises of Caledonia Housing Association and its subsidiary partner Cordale Housing Association. This policy sets out the Groups commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of tenants, residents, employees, contractors, animals and members of the public.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear framework for gaining access to resident's homes to carry out statutory safety inspections, servicing, testing, associated remedial works, and emergency safety works where access has not been provided voluntarily.

This policy seeks to balance the Group's legal and regulatory obligations, as set out below, with residents' rights to privacy, dignity, and the peaceful enjoyment of their homes.

- Gas safety inspections and servicing.
- Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs).
- Smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarm inspections.
- Water hygiene and legionella management.
- Asbestos management.
- Fire safety and other statutory safety requirements.
- Emergency health and safety works.

This policy does not apply to gaining access to a property as part of the repossession process.

1.2 Scope of the Policy

The policy applies where access is required to undertake statutory inspections, testing, servicing, repairs or emergency safety works and applies to:

- Scottish Secure Tenants.
- Short Scottish Secure Tenants.
- Occupiers of Group-managed properties.
- Factored owners where relevant contractual provisions apply.
- Employees and contractors acting on behalf of the Group.

Individual Tenancy & Occupancy Agreements will provide detail on tenant and resident rights and responsibilities concerning access provision.

2.0 Principles, Aims and Objectives

2.1 Policy Objectives

The Group will:

- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of tenants and residents.
- Achieve and maintain compliance with all statutory safety requirements.
- Ensure a consistent and proportionate approach to access issues.
- Make every reasonable effort to secure voluntary access.
- Use forced access only as a measure of last resort except in emergencies.
- Take account of vulnerability, equality and human rights considerations when making decisions regarding access.

2.2 Legislative and Regulatory Context

This policy operates within the requirements of:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001, 2006, 2010.
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 as amended by the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- Electrical safety requirements within the Scottish Repairing Standard.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Human Rights Act 1998.
- Scottish Housing Regulator guidance relating to tenant and resident safety.

The Group recognises its obligations under the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework and the Scottish Social Housing Charter, particularly the Charter outcomes relating to tenant safety, quality of housing, effective housing management, communications and equalities.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Key Terms

Key terms are summarised below:

- **Forced Access** - Entry to a property without the resident's co-operation following appropriate notice, authorisation and exhausted attempts to obtain voluntary access.
- **Emergency Access** - Immediate entry required to prevent danger to life, health, property or neighbouring residents.

- **Statutory Safety Inspection** - An inspection required by legislation or regulation including but not limited to annual gas safety inspections and EICR testing.
- **Reasonable Attempts** - Documented efforts to obtain access including letters, telephone calls, text messages, emails and personal visits.
- **Vulnerable Resident** - A tenant or resident whose age, disability, health condition or personal circumstances may require additional support.

4.0 Policy Statement

4.1 Core Principles and Standards

The Group will take all reasonable steps to gain voluntary access in all cases wherever possible.

Where access is repeatedly denied and statutory compliance is at risk, the Group may take forced access, provided that at least 24 hours' notice has been given in accordance with the tenancy agreement and applicable legal requirements.

Forced access will only be authorised when:

- Reasonable attempts to obtain access have failed.
- There is evidence supporting the need for entry.
- The action is necessary and proportionate.
- Appropriate management approval has been obtained.

Emergency access may be undertaken immediately where there is a genuine and immediate risk to life or safety.

Forced access will be attended by no fewer than two members of staff and/or authorised representatives.

Photographic evidence will be taken to record the condition of the property and its contents at the point of entry. The Group will ensure that all actions are appropriately documented, evidenced, and auditable.

We reserve the right to access any unsecured property to secure it or its contents against vandalism or unauthorised entry. Such instances will be managed as an emergency repair.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Implementation Responsibilities

- **Management Board**
 - Policy Approval.
 - Receive assurance regarding safety compliance performance.
- **Executive Management Team**
 - Ensure adequate resources are available to implement this, policy.
- **Operations Department**
 - Deliver statutory inspection programmes.
 - Maintain compliance records.
 - Escalate cases of repeated no access.
 - Support engagement with tenants and/or residents.
 - Identify vulnerabilities.
 - Assist with access arrangements.
- **Contractors**
 - Carry out inspections and works safely.
 - Report access failures promptly.

5.2 Monitoring and Enforcement

Compliance staff will monitor:

- All statutory Health and Safety compliance rates including but not limited to Gas safety and EICR checks.
- Access refusal rates.
- Forced access activities.
- Emergency access incidents.

Performance shall be reported through the Group's governance arrangements.

6.0 Procedures

6.1 Process Overview

We will always attempt to contact the resident to give advanced warning of any work or inspection required, giving as much notice as possible to arrange a mutually convenient time for the work or inspection to be carried out.

Individual procedures for each area of statutory compliance will set out the arrangements for resident contact and access. As a minimum, we will make two attempts and, where appropriate, up to three attempts to secure access by

agreement before we take action to force access. Where there are health and safety or welfare concerns, we will shorten the overall notice process but will always aim to give at least 24 hours' notice.

Forced access must be authorised by a member of the Heads of Service team and where not available a member of the Executive Management Team. The authorising officer must be satisfied that reasonable access attempts have been exhausted, and the proposed action is proportionate.

6.2 Emergency Access Procedure

Emergency entry may occur where there is a reasonable belief that immediate access is necessary because of:

- Suspected gas leak.
- Carbon monoxide alarm activation.
- Fire or suspected fire.
- Dangerous electrical installations.
- Significant escape of water.
- Structural instability.
- Serious welfare concerns.
- Immediate danger to occupants or neighbouring properties.

Where emergency access is required:

- Contact attempts shall be made where circumstances permit.
- Police Scotland, Fire and Rescue Service or Ambulance Service where appropriate may be requested to attend.
- A locksmith shall be used where practical.
- Staff shall identify themselves before entry.
- Only actions required to remove or reduce the immediate risk shall be undertaken.

Where an immediate threat to life exists, emergency action may proceed without prior authorisation, provided the decision is formally recorded afterwards.

6.3 Securing the Property

Where the resident is absent:

- Replacement locks may be fitted.
- Temporary security measures may be installed.
- A written notice shall be left explaining the reason for entry and actions taken.
- Where present suited keys (Bi locks) will be utilised to avoid the use of locksmiths.

6.4 Post-Incident Reporting

A record shall be completed detailing:

- Reason for access.
- Attendees.
- Findings.
- Actions undertaken.
- Follow-up requirements.

6.5 Rechargeable Costs

We will recharge the resident for any costs associated with the enforcement of a forced access. The recharge will be based on our Rechargeable Repairs policy and will include the costs of trades' time and materials required to repair the damage caused by forcing entry such as locks and replacement keys.

In cases where the resident initially agrees to give access but then refuses at a later stage, we will also seek to recover any abortive costs that have been incurred as a result.

6.6 Reference to Procedural Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Repairs and Maintenance Policy.
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Data Protection Policy.
- Unacceptable Actions Policy.
- Tenant Handbook.
- Compliance Procedures including Gas Servicing, Electrical Safety etc.
- Tenancy Management Procedure.

7.0 Compliance and Enforcement

It is important that all members of staff, in carrying out their duties for the Group, do so in accordance with the Group's policy framework. Our policy framework ensures we comply with laws and regulation, while giving guidance to inform operations and decision-making. Our policies have been designed to be clear and easy to understand and are available on our website and intranet. If any member of staff is unclear as to their responsibilities under this policy, then they should refer to their line manager and / or the policy author for further guidance. A failure to comply with Group policies can have serious consequences for the Group.

Should an employee become concerned about serious non-compliance with the policy, they should speak to their line manager or refer to the guidance set out in the Group Whistleblowing policy.

8.0 Review and Revision

8.1 Review Frequency

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier where there are changes in legislation or regulatory requirements or where significant incidents identify a need for review.

In the case of any conflict, legislation will take precedence over this policy.

8.2 Responsibility for Updates

Responsibility for reviewing and updating this policy rests with the Head of Investment & Sustainability.

9.0 Approval and Effective Date

9.1 Approval Details

Approval Body: Caledonia Management Board
Approval Date: 13 August 2026

9.2 Effective Date

This policy shall take effect from the date of approval.

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)

Person(s) responsible for carrying out this assessment	
Policy Owner:	Head of Investment & Sustainability (HoIS)
EQIA Assessor(s):	HoIS, Governance Officer, Business Analyst
Name of Policy:	Forced Access Policy
Date of last EQIA:	N/A – New Policy

Protected Characteristic: Age	
Potential/actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Older residents may experience difficulty understanding correspondence, arranging appointments, providing access or responding to enforcement action. Some older residents may experience cognitive impairment, frailty, social isolation or digital exclusion, increasing the risk of non-engagement. The policy also provides positive benefits through enhanced safety compliance and protection from gas, electrical, fire and other safety risks.	Use multiple communication methods; provide clear and accessible information; allow additional engagement where required; involve advocates, family members or support agencies where appropriate; ensure vulnerability assessments are undertaken before forced access decisions; record reasonable adjustments.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☒ Negative ☐ Neutral ☐

Protected Characteristic: Disability	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Disabled residents, including people with physical, sensory, learning, cognitive or mental health conditions, may face barriers to communication or engagement. Forced access may cause significant anxiety or distress for some disabled residents. However, the policy positively supports disabled residents by ensuring homes remain safe and compliant with statutory safety standards.	Make reasonable adjustments in line with Equality Act duties; provide information in accessible formats; consider support workers, carers or advocates; assess vulnerabilities before authorising forced access; adapt appointment arrangements where possible; ensure staff receive awareness training relating to disability and vulnerability.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☒ Negative ☐ Neutral ☐

Protected Characteristic: Gender Reassignment (transgender)	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
No direct adverse impact identified. However, some transgender residents may feel anxious about staff or contractors entering their home, particularly where privacy concerns exist.	Ensure confidentiality and respectful treatment; ensure contractors and staff adhere to equality, dignity and privacy requirements.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Neutral ☒

Protected Characteristic: Marriage and civil marriage or partnership	
Potential/actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
No specific adverse impacts identified. The policy applies regardless of marital or partnership status. Some households may require communication with joint tenants or partners regarding access arrangements.	Ensure communication is directed to relevant household members where appropriate and tenancy arrangements permit.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Neutral ☒

Protected Characteristic: Pregnancy and maternity	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Pregnant residents or those with a new baby may find arranging access more challenging and may experience additional stress if enforcement action is being considered. The policy also provides positive benefits by ensuring safe living conditions for expectant mothers, new mothers and their children.	Offer flexible appointment arrangements where possible; take account of health circumstances and caring responsibilities; ensure sufficient notice is provided, except when there is a need to respond to an emergency situation.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☒ Negative ☐ Neutral ☐

Protected Characteristic: Race (including, ethnicity, nationality and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities)	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Residents whose first language is not English may not fully understand access requirements or the consequences of	Provide translation, interpretation and alternative language services where required;

non-engagement. Cultural differences may also affect communication and trust. Failure to make suitable communication arrangements could result in disproportionate enforcement action.	ensure communications are clear and accessible; record language needs and support requirements.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☒ Negative ☒ Neutral ☐

Protected Characteristic: Religion or belief (consider dates/times of events in relation to religious practices/festivals)	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Access appointments may occasionally conflict with religious observance, holy days, festivals or prayer times. No significant adverse impacts otherwise identified.	Consider religious requirements when scheduling appointments where reasonably practicable; engage with residents to agree suitable arrangements.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Neutral ☒

Protected Characteristic: Sex / Gender	
Potential/actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
No direct impact identified. Some residents, particularly those living alone, may feel vulnerable or uncomfortable about attendance at their property.	Ensure visits are conducted professionally; maintain the policy requirement for a minimum of two authorised attendees during forced access; provide identification and explanations of actions taken.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Neutral ☒

Protected Characteristic: Sexual orientation (LGBTQ+)	
Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
No direct impact identified. Potential concerns relate to privacy, dignity and respectful treatment.	Ensure staff and contractors comply with equality, diversity and confidentiality standards and adopt a respectful approach in all interactions.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☐ Negative ☐ Neutral ☒

Beyond the 9 Protected Characteristics

- Socioeconomic status, vulnerable households, caring responsibilities

Potential / actual impact identified	Actions to remove or reduce impact
Residents with low incomes may experience financial hardship if rechargeable costs are applied following forced access. Carers may struggle to accommodate appointments. Vulnerable households and those at risk of tenancy failure may be disproportionately affected. The policy also provides positive safety benefits for these groups.	Ensure multiple contact attempts are made; provide flexible appointment options where possible; consider vulnerabilities and individual circumstances before enforcement action; signpost residents to support services where appropriate; ensure recharge decisions are reasonable and proportionate.
Overall Impact?	Positive ☒ Negative ☒ Neutral ☐

Further Recommendations?

(Consultation, issues, questions, changes to policy made in light of the assessment and any follow-up actions, including action lead and timescales)

None.

If the assessment identifies negative impacts that are material, an extended equality impact assessment will be carried out.

Extended impact assessment carried out

Not applicable.