

Accommodation Decant due to Redevelopment or Pending Repairs

INTRODUCTION

This section sets out the principles relating to the re-housing of tenants affected by redevelopment of Projects or pending repairs.

A 'decant' involves a tenant moving from current permanent/temporary accommodation to an alternative home, usually during major refurbishment or repair of their current property. In such cases, the move to alternative accommodation would be temporary.

In a redevelopment scheme involving demolition, tenants will need permanent rehousing.

Some tenants may choose permanent re-housing in another property in the area, some may wish to move away for good, whilst others may wish to move away to temporary accommodation and then return to a new home in the redeveloped area.

CONSULTATION FOR REDEVELOPMENT

PRHA would consult with tenants in a range of ways throughout a proposed redevelopment scheme in accordance with statutory requirements and the good practice set out in "Decanting Tenants (CIH/Housing Corporation 2000).

PRHA would seek broad opinion in the early strategic stages, when drafting an area regeneration framework, for instance. Once a more detailed scheme has been agreed, PRHA would carry out personal consultations and surveys with affected occupiers.

PRHA would interview all affected tenants by appointment in their own home to:

- Outline the programme as it affects them.
- Discuss the re-housing needs of the permanent household for whom the landlord accepts responsibility.
- Discuss the re-housing options available.

The range of re-housing options includes:

- Moving to and renting an existing PRHA property.

Effective Date: 1 st October 2018	Review Date: 10 th March 2026
Approved by PRHA Board SLT: 2 nd April 2026	File No: HST005

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- Move away from PRHA another Housing Association or Local Authority home through the choice based lettings or other housing schemes.
- Move to a temporary property until another the required accommodation is located
- Moving to and renting an existing PRHA property elsewhere in the Borough.

Interviews with those with known medical or welfare needs will be carried out first. Care and support services will be involved at interview stage where applicable.

OFFERS

Where appropriate PRHA would re-house tenants and other members of the household "Who can be considered as part of the household" Offers shall be made in accordance with the following principles:

- Complies with PRHA Allocation Policy & Procedures
- Where appropriate, offers may be made on a 'like for like' basis on property type (move from a flat to a flat, or move from a house to a house)
- PRHA cannot guarantee that households within the permanent household with a right to housing will be re-housed separately.
- PRHA shall make reasonable endeavour to accommodate the wishes of tenants who state a preference for rehousing.

REFUSALS, APPEALS & REVIEWS

PRHA aims to ensure that we reach agreement on offers of suitable alternative accommodation so that the re-housing programme proceeds smoothly.

This will be achieved through timely and sensitive dialogue with occupiers so that offers are appropriate, backed up with help with the costs (in some cases) and practicalities of moving.

If refusal does occur and following a review PRHA finds that the offer was suitable and reasonable to accept, PRHA would take possession proceedings under appropriate grounds. The offer of accommodation will be available to the tenant when the possession order takes effect.

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SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE

PRHA recognises that moving home is especially difficult for certain tenants and residents. PRHA would prepare for re-housing by working with residents to identify who needs extra help, care and support as part of the move. Support staff would work closely with care and other support services to identify and address unmet needs among residents; to find suitable alternative accommodation that meets any special needs of tenants; and to provide support throughout the rehousing process including settling into a new home/neighbourhood.

ACCOMADATION DECANT DUE TO PENDING REPAIRS

The tenant will be expected to sign a 'decant licence' that they agree to temporarily move from their original home to another (decant property), provided by the PRHA. The licence will provide the tenant with legal permission to occupy the property for the period of the decant. For the period of the decant the tenant will retain security of tenure at their original home as an assured tenant or an assured shorthold (starter) tenant, as the case may be. The tenant will continue to be responsible for payment of rent for his or her original home.

Provision of Alternative Temporary Accommodation:

Upon being advised that major works are required the Property Services Team and Housing Services Team will arrange to visit the current tenant(s) of the affected property to discuss the works to be undertaken to their home and agree the details of alternative temporary accommodation. PRHA would provide a property of a similar size as the tenant's current accommodation, in an area of their choice whenever possible, and provide an opportunity to view the property both internally and externally. The proposed property will have had a technical inspection to ensure;

- All Health and Safety issues are addressed.
- The condition of the property is brought up to the published decent homes standard.
- All rooms are habitable and in descent decorative state.

ARRANGING THE MOVE

Once a property has been agreed upon both parties shall meet at a mutually convenient time and place to formally agree and sign acceptance of the terms and conditions of the decant licence. At this

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meeting a formal date for occupation of the alternative accommodation will be arranged to ensure the tenant can arrange;

- Redirection of mail
- Disconnection and reconnection of TV or satellite aerials
- Disconnection and reconnection of telephone
- Provision of gas and electric utility services.

If required PRHA will arrange for;

- The disconnection and re-connection of the tenant's cooker and washing machine
- The tenant's furniture and belongings to be moved to the decant accommodation. If necessary PRHA will arrange for the storage of any furniture the tenant is unable to take to their temporary accommodation.

RETURNING TO THEIR PROPERTY

Provided that the tenant has a clear rent account and has maintained a positive residence history, both at their previous tenancy and at the decant address, they will be offered the choice to remain permanently at the decant property. If they choose to remain they will be signed up for a new tenancy accordingly. If the tenant does not meet the above criteria or wishes to move back to their home on completion of the works, both parties will meet at a mutually convenient time to formally agree a date of return to their home.

From the agreed date of return to their home the tenant can arrange;

- Redirection of mail
- Disconnection and reconnection of TV or satellite aerials
- Disconnection and reconnection of telephone
- Provision of gas and electric utility services

If required PRHA will arrange for;

- The disconnection and re-connection of the tenant's cooker and washing machine
- The tenant's furniture and belongings to be moved back to their home including any previously kept in storage

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Property Services will inspect the decant property prior to the tenant's return to their home. Any damage caused at the decant property will be recharged.

OTHER DECANT SITUATIONS

The requirement to decant a tenant can also arise for reasons other than the need to complete structural repairs to their home. An example would be following serious fire damage. In such situations the same policy as above would apply.

Effective Date: 1st October 2018**Review Date:** 10th March 2026**Approved by PRHA Board SLT:** 2nd April 2026**File No:** HST005