

TANGMERE REHOUSING PRIORITY SCHEME

Introduction

This temporary scheme is produced in the context of the discovery of structural defects to Tangmere (and Northolt) blocks on the Broadwater Farm Estate and the decision taken by Haringey's gas suppliers to switch off the gas supply to Tangmere in October 2018. This means there is a very pressing need to decant that block as soon as possible. This scheme will apply pending a decision being taken by Cabinet on whether the defects to either block should be remedied or the block(s) demolished.

The decision on the future of the blocks will be accompanied by adoption of a permanent rehousing and payments policy the benefit of which will be extended to all those who move from their homes under this scheme.

This scheme sets out the priorities for the temporary rehousing of Tangmere tenants and the property sizes they will be offered.

This scheme may also be applied to Northolt tenants should the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Planning decide to commence the rehousing of these residents if for any reason the position regarding the safety of the block changes before Cabinet makes a decision about the future of that block.

This scheme will apply until it is replaced by the permanent scheme referred to above.

Legal and Policy context

Tenants are being rehoused under this scheme because of the Council's actions and not because of transfer applications made by them. Therefore, the provisions of Part 6 Housing Act 1996 do not apply to the transfers under this scheme: section 159(4A) Housing Act 1996.

However, Section 2.3.1 of the Council's Housing Allocation Policy provides that that Policy will nonetheless apply to such transfers. In particular, Section 15.14 set out the Council's policy with regard to decant moves for essential repairs.

This scheme follows the Council's Housing Allocation Policy (including Section 15.14) insofar as the urgency of the circumstances permits. For the avoidance of doubt, where there is conflict with the terms of the Allocation Policy, the terms of this scheme apply.

Whether Cabinet decides to demolish either block or to undertake strengthening works, the Council is entitled to possession under Ground 10 Schedule 2 Housing Act 1985. When relying on Ground 10, it is required to secure that there is suitable alternative accommodation available to the tenant.

General principles

The prime aim of this scheme is to temporarily rehouse tenants from Tangmere before October 2018.

The Council will offer suitable decant accommodation in Council or housing association stock in line with this scheme. Decant accommodation means a secure tenancy of a Council property or an Assured or Assured Shorthold Tenancy if in housing association stock. In each case the property will be suitable to the tenant's needs.

Decant accommodation may not become available for all those to be decanted before October 2018. So far as possible, tenants will be made a "single move" offer straight into their decant accommodation. Where this is not possible, the Council will seek to minimise the time spent by tenants in other forms of accommodation (such as hotel or suitable private sector accommodation) before decant accommodation becomes available.

Because of the urgency of the situation the Council may need to serve notices seeking possession and will thereafter seek possession where necessary under Ground 10 and provide suitable decant accommodation.

Although the offer will usually be of temporary decant accommodation (because no decision has yet been made by Cabinet as the future of either block), the tenant may opt for it to be permanent, and it may in any event become permanent should a decision be made to demolish the block in question.

In the event that the decision is taken to remedy the defects in the block(s), it is anticipated that tenants will have the option of either returning to their former homes once all strengthening works have been completed, or remaining in their decant accommodation permanently.

Initial Interview

Following a decision to temporarily rehouse tenants of Tangmere, each household will be interviewed to:

- Establish the size of property they need
- Establish the tenants' preferences with regard to the location and landlord of their decant accommodation (although the Council may well not be able to accommodate them)
- Establish their provisional preference for their decant to be temporary or permanent
- Give tenants support in completing any paperwork or on-line applications, and
- Provide tenants with advice on the rehousing process and various options available to them

Tenants will be supported in the transfer process and in making an informed decision.

Size of new home

Appendix 1

Tenants will be offered decant accommodation based on their Housing Need as set out in section 8 of the Housing Allocations Policy, unless they are currently under-occupying their home by more than one bedroom and wish to retain one spare bedroom.

No under-occupation payments will be made for moving to a smaller home unless the move is or becomes permanent

Priority and preferences

Properties will be matched by appropriate bedroom size and, where possible, their preferences as to location and landlord. Where there is more than one Tangmere household who meets the size and preferences for a property, priority will be given to households who contain a vulnerable person, with the second priority being given to those who have children who are attending a local school. Other local connections, such as support services, may also be considered on an individual basis

Where there is more than one household suitable for a property, and which share the priority as described above, priority will be given on the basis of who has the longest tenancy on the estate. Those who have succeeded to their home will be given the start date of the original tenancy at that property (see Allocations Policy para 5.3).

Offer of suitable decant accommodation

All offers of housing will be made by a direct offer. Given the urgency to move tenants, households will only receive one suitable offer which they must not unreasonably refuse.

Wherever possible, the Council will seek to move households into vacant Council or Housing Association properties on a temporary or (where the tenant wishes) a permanent basis.

If a tenant believes an offer is unsuitable, then they will be entitled to request a review within 7 days of the offer, and the Council will make a decision within 14 days thereafter. The review will otherwise proceed as set out in paragraph 13.3 of the Allocations Policy so far as it applies to these circumstances.

If and when a block is repaired, the tenant will have the option as to whether to return or remain in decant property unless they have previously advised the Council that they wish their move to be permanent.

Payments

Tenants will be eligible for support and/or financial assistance to cover the costs of moving to a new home and, where this is possible, to return to their original home. Those eligible for Under-Occupation payments will also receive these if and when their move becomes permanent.

Leaseholders

Appendix 1

Tangmere Leaseholders will be offered the same options as available in the Estate Renewal and Payments Policy. For residential leaseholders, this will include;

- the full market value for their home
- an additional 10% payment (termed 'Home Loss' in the policy)
- an offer of a Portable Equity Loan to enable them to purchase a new home in the borough.
- Other payments to assist them in purchasing a new home

Non-resident leaseholder will receive an additional 7.5% above the current market value of their property.

For the purpose of this scheme, a resident leaseholder is defined as a leaseholder who resides in one of the blocks, as at 26 June 2018.

Details of this offer, eligibility and criteria can be found in the Estate Renewal and Payments Policy.