

COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICE  
DECANT POLICY 2026



# 1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the Council’s approach when it becomes necessary to temporarily or permanently move tenants (a “decant”) from their home to enable essential works, redevelopment, or address immediate health and safety concerns.

The policy seeks to ensure fairness, transparency, and minimal disruption to tenants whilst ensuring the council’s legal responsibilities as a landlord are met.

## 2. Policy Objectives

- Ensure decants are arranged only when necessary
- Minimise disruption to tenants and their families
- Provide suitable alternative accommodation
- Support tenants throughout the decant process
- Maintain clear and timely communication
- Comply with legal obligations ( eg, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Housing Act 1985).

### 2.1 The policy outlines:

- When and why a decant may be required
- What tenants can expect before, during, and after a decant
- Support for vulnerable households
- Roles and responsibilities, including arrangements for personal belongings
- Tenants’ rights regarding return
- Compensation, where applicable

## 3. Types of Decant

### 3.1 Temporary Decant

Where a tenant must leave their home for a limited period, with the intention of returning once works are completed.

### 3.2 Permanent Decant

Where a tenant cannot return to their original home due to demolition, major redevelopment or best use of housing stock.

## 4. When a Decant May Be Required

### A decant may be necessary where:

- Major repairs or structural works are required that make the property uninhabitable
- There is a serious hazard which cannot be addressed whilst the tenant is in the property.
- The property is subject to regeneration or redevelopment
- There are significant health and safety concerns (e.g. fire, flood, asbestos)
- Emergency incidents render the property unsafe
- The Council's contractor requires the property to be vacant to undertake works safely and efficiently.
- Statutory notices or enforcement action require the property to be vacated
- The health concerns of the tenant or household deem it unsuitable for them to remain.

## 5. What Tenants Can Expect

### If a decant is required, tenants will:

- Be assigned a Single Point of Contact (SPOC)- a dedicated Tenancy Management officer where possible
- Be fully informed of the reasons, timelines, and arrangements
- Be offered a suitable alternative property, if staying with family/friends is not viable.
- Receive reasonable notice in writing, unless in emergency situations
- Be consulted and supported throughout the process
- Be given the choice to return, if the decant is temporary
- Be entitled to compensation or financial assistance, where appropriate

### 5.1 Suitable accommodation

Accommodation can be offered in several forms, but where possible will be limited to a B&B or council owned accommodation. The type of accommodation offered will be determined in accordance with the decant procedure, whilst having regard to:

- Timeframe needed
- Overall cost (B&B, removals, flooring etc)
- Needs of the family/person
- Availability

The specific needs of the displaced tenant/family will be assessed throughout the process and the offer of accommodation may alter if the needs of the household members change.

Only household members declared to the housing service will be considered for alternative accommodation.

Refusal of an offer of accommodation that is deemed to be suitable (without reasonable justification) will be escalated to senior members of staff who may consider enforcement action.

## 6. Support for Vulnerable Households

**We will assess individual needs to provide tailored support, including but not limited to:**

- Additional assistance for elderly, disabled, or medically vulnerable tenants
- Help with packing, removals, and settling in
- Liaison with care providers, adult social care, or support workers
- Priority in choosing suitable, accessible, or adapted accommodation
- Additional communication formats (e.g. large print, translations)

## 7. Arrangements for the Move

**The Council will:**

- Arrange and pay for removal services
- Help with disconnection/reconnection of white goods and essential appliances
- Offer basic furnishings or fittings if the decant accommodation is unfurnished
- Fit carpets, where required, and assist with moving large furniture
- Provide support for moving personal items and pets
- Offer transport where necessary

## 8. Works and Access

**While the decant is in place, the Council will:**

- Arrange all access required to carry out necessary works
- Carry out a full Health and Safety inspection and sign-off before the tenant returns
- Notify the tenant of progress and expected timelines
- Allow the tenant to inspect the property before returning
- Consult the tenant regarding any changes affecting their return

## 9. Responsibility for Belongings

**Tenants are responsible for the safe storage of personal belongings, but:**

- The Council will support moving and storing items for temporary decants.
- In emergency decants, the Council may arrange storage and will not dispose of any items without prior consent
- Any belongings left without notice may be removed and stored for a period, but the Council cannot guarantee long-term safekeeping

## 10. Returning or Remaining

- If a decant is temporary, tenants will be supported to return to their original property once it is safe
- Where a decant is permanent (e.g. due to redevelopment or best use of housing stock), alternative long-term housing will be discussed and offered
- All decisions will be communicated in writing and tenants will be consulted before final moves
- We will arrange help for moving and reconnection of appliances. We will also assist with floor coverings for the initial move.
- In some circumstances, reasonable costs may be claimed for any upheaval, eg disconnecting appliances etc, these are called disturbance costs.

## 11. Temporary Decants

### Tenants who are required to decant on a temporary basis will:

- Only pay rent towards one property (lowest rental charge)
- Only be liable for council tax for the property they move into
- Be required to pay utility costs at the property they are temporarily residing in.

## 12. Compensation and Financial Support

### Tenants may be eligible for:

- Home Loss Payment (if permanently relocated) as per statutory guidance. Tenants are not eligible if they move permanently through choice
- Disturbance Allowance (to cover reasonable expenses of moving)
- Additional discretionary payments in hardship cases
- Support with utility reconnection, mail redirection, or other incidentals

## 13. Leaseholders and Homeowners

### Where a property is affected by major works or redevelopment initiated by the borough council:

- The Council will offer to purchase privately owned properties at full market value (determined by an independent surveyor).
- Owner-occupiers (living in the property for at least 12 months) may be eligible for:
  - Home Loss Payment.
  - Reimbursement of reasonable costs associated with purchasing a similar home in the preferred area (including returning to a new home on the development).
  - Non-resident homeowners may not be eligible for a Home Loss Payment but may, in certain situations, claim reasonable costs for purchasing a similar property elsewhere in the UK.

## 14. Responsibility and Decision Making

The table below sets out responsibilities for decision making during the decant process

Person Responsible	Scope
ASB and Tenancy Manager	Overall responsibility for legislative compliance
Housing Repairs Manager	Responsible for ensuring remedial works are completed and Safety check
Senior Tenancy Management Officer	Responsible for overseeing individual decant process
Housing Options Manager/Team Leader	Responsible for consideration of homelessness legislation and assistance
Tenancy Management Officer (Housing Officer)	Managing individual decant process per case
Head of Housing	Overall Service compliance

## 15. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years or following significant changes in legislation or best practice. The Housing Service will monitor all decants to ensure fairness, timeliness, and compliance.