


## TENANT AND HOUSING SERVICES

### DECANT POLICY

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Cornerstone Housing Ltd (Cornerstone) recognises that occasions arise when it has to either permanently or temporarily relocate individuals or groups of its tenants. Decants are usually necessary when a property is in need of major repair work, requires refurbishment or when a property needs to be rebuilt or disposed of to enable effective asset management in line with Cornerstone's Asset Management Strategy.

Cornerstone recognises that leaving a property may be a stressful and a potentially difficult experience for tenants. We aim to minimise tenant concerns through the provision of regular communication and advice prior to the move.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. From time to time Cornerstone may require either a permanent move for tenants due to demolition, major remodelling or regeneration, or a temporary move for those who are required to leave their current property to allow for remedial works to be carried out.
- 2.2. These circumstances may arise where the Board has approved a project which has significant long term impacts on tenants and on the Strategic/Operational Plan. They may also arise where planned maintenance programmes require a temporary move prior to facilitate works.
- 2.3. It outlines a managed decanting process, which may offer if appropriate and if available alternative accommodation as well as possible assistance for expenses incurred.
- 2.4. This policy establishes the decant arrangements and the circumstances of payments being made to tenants, if any.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- Decant/Decanting*** means a process where residents are required to move from their homes due to the reasons stated in the introduction above. These plans may involve demolition or major repair or improvement to the property (resulting in a significant change of character to the property and will require residents to relocate, either temporarily or permanently for the works or development to be undertaken). This does not include residents moving due to transfers, mutual exchanges or choosing to end their tenancy.
- Temporary Decant*** means tenants are moved out of their dwelling for a period of time, enabling the property to be improved and then move back into a newly developed property.
- Permanent Decant*** means tenants of the dwelling must vacate the property in order that the property may be improved or redeveloped. The tenant will not be returning to the property.
- Fair Notice*** means accounting for time leading up to the development giving consideration to the development and needs and circumstances of the tenant.
- Relocation Costs*** means a discretionary payment that may or may not necessarily cover costs

#### **4. DECANT & ASSESSMENT**

The planning of tenant decants must be undertaken in consultation with the Asset Manager to ensure that relocation occurs in line with project and housing requirements.

#### **5. NOTICE OF DECANT AND NOTICE PERIOD**

Tenants will be given a notice period as required in accordance with the relevant lease agreement under the Residential Tenancies Act 1995. For those with whom an agreement can be reached, the period of notice can be agreed between Cornerstone and the tenant.

The decanting process will begin as soon as possible after tenants have been notified formally of the organisation's intention to decant. The aim is to achieve vacant possession of the premises prior to the projected commencement date of works/demolition.

#### **6. APPLICANT'S RIGHT TO RETURN OR REMAIN**

There is no 'right to return' to either the newly constructed/rejuvenated dwelling or remain in the property that a tenant has been decanted to.

Cornerstone reserves the discretion to re-establish new tenancies with previous tenants. Tenants who have a history of rent arrears and/or debts may not be granted a new tenancy.

#### **7. RELOCATION COSTS**

The determination on what Relocation Costs will apply and the application thereof will be determined by the Housing Services Manager and Asset Manager in line with the delegated levels of authority within the appropriate budget of either the Maintenance Budget or Project Budget.

Where a tenant has installed approved fixtures and/or fittings at their own cost, the tenant has the right to remove these items from the property upon vacating.

The decision to reimburse or contribute to the cost of replacements/other improvements is solely at the discretion of Cornerstone Housing.

#### **8. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**

An appeal against any aspect of this policy or procedure will be dealt with as per Cornerstone's Grievance, Complaints, Appeals and Compliments Policy.

## CHANGE LOG

<i>Revision</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Date</i>
1.0	New Policy	20/08/2018