



Decant Policy (Adverse Incidents: Fire, Flood, Emergency Repairs, Damp & Mould, Structural Failure)

POLICY TITLE:	Decant Policy (Adverse Incidents: Fire, Flood, Emergency Repairs, Damp & Mould, Structural Failure)
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Housing Management
DATE APPROVED:	11 June 2026
APPROVED BY:	SLHD Board
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	11 June 2026
DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW:	11 June 2029
ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:	
ASSOCIATED CUSTOMER PUBLICATIONS:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Customer Support and Accessibility Policy Secure Tenancy Agreement Corporate Plan 2024-2028 Equality and Diversity Strategy CDC Allocations Policy Customer Access Strategy Secure Tenancy Strategy Housing and Neighbourhood Management Policy Safeguarding Policy ASB Policy Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy Compensation and Goodwill Policy Repairs and Maintenance Policy Rechargeable Works Policy Damp and Mould Policy Communications Strategy Customer Access Strategy Fire Management Policy ICT Strategy Domestic Abuse Policy
TEAMS AFFECTED:	All Employees, Contractors, Board Members and St Leger Homes Tenants and Customers
THIS POLICY REPLACES WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT:	N/A

DOCUMENT CONTROL

For guidance on completing this section please refer to the document version control guidance notes

Revision History

Date of this revision:	New Policy
Date of next review:	June 2029
Responsible Officer:	Head of Housing Management

Version Number	Version Date	Author/Group commenting	Summary of Changes
01	March 2026	Head of Housing Management	New Policy

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Policy Creation and Review Checklist

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DATE COMPLETED
Best practice researched (House Mark, HQN, NFA, RSH, general websites)	Head of Housing Management	Feb 2026
Review current practices from similar organisations (NFA)	Head of Housing Management	Feb 2026
Undertake customer consultation if applicable	Head of Housing Management	April 2026
Staff consultation through Trade Unions if applicable	Head of Housing Management	N/A
Trade Union consultation if applicable	Head of Housing Management	N/A
Other stakeholder consultation if applicable	Head of Housing Management	N/A
Equality analysis carried out through the intranet for all new policies or fundamental changes	Head of Housing Management/EDI Manager	April 2026

NB. The above table must be completed on all occasions. The policy will not be accepted or approved by EMT without this information completed.

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Decant Policy

(Adverse Incidents: Fire, Flood, Emergency Repairs, Damp & Mould, Structural Failure)

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 St Leger Homes of Doncaster (SLHD) is committed to ensuring that all tenants live in a safe, healthy and habitable home. In some circumstances such as fire, flood, structural failure, serious damp and mould, or major works it may become necessary to temporarily move a household from their home due to a property being temporarily unfit for habitation. This process is known as a **decant**.
- 1.1.2 SLHD recognises that moving can be difficult. We are committed to making decanting as easy as possible and will keep tenants informed at every stage of the decant process. We will support tenants throughout the decant process to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum and they can return to their home in a timely manner. We will try as far as possible, taking into account availability of alternative accommodation, to decant to suitable locations and property types and will always take into account the needs of the customer and their family.
- 1.1.3 This policy provides a clear, consistent framework for when and how decants will occur, ensuring safety, fairness, transparency, dignity, and regulatory compliance.

2 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that tenants fully understand the reasons for a decant, the support available, and what to expect throughout the process.
- Protect tenants' safety by establishing a clear decision-making process for determining when a home is unfit for habitation.
- Ensure tenants are moved safely and efficiently to suitable temporary or permanent accommodation.
- Define roles and responsibilities across SLHD teams.
- Provide clear communication standards and timescales for updates to tenants.
- Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements (Housing Act 1985, Housing Act 2004 / HHSRS, Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, Equality Act 2010, Fire Safety regulations, Housing Ombudsman Code).
- Ensure fair and consistent application of compensation, disturbance payments and support.

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- Embed lessons learned from the Regulator of Social Housing, Housing Ombudsman determinations and internal adverse incident reviews.

3 Scope

3.1 The scope of this policy covers all situations in which SLHD is required to decant a tenant temporarily, to enable essential safety works, major repairs or compliance activity where continued occupation would be unsafe or impractical. It details the requirement for tenants to be kept updated throughout the decant process and compensating tenants for 'reasonable expenses' associated with moving. The policy also includes the process and policy to determine when and how temporary decants can become permanent.

3.2 This policy applies to:

- All SLHD-managed homes and council tenancies (secure, introductory, flexible, licence holders).
- All incidents where a property becomes dangerous, uninhabitable, or unsuitable for occupation for example due to:
 - Fire
 - Flood / water ingress
 - Structural failure
 - Loss of essential facilities
 - Emergency Repairs including serious damp & mould
 - Contamination
 - Major repairs / intrusive or unsafe works
 - Enforcement or statutory requirements (including emergency services and building control)
 - Planned demolition or regeneration

This list is not exhaustive.

4. Definitions

4.1 Decant

A decant is a legally managed temporary move from a tenant's home because it is unsafe to remain or because major works are required that cannot be completed with the tenant in occupation.

In legal and regulatory terms, a decant occurs when a landlord must provide "suitable alternative accommodation" under its obligations to:

- Comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's Safety and Quality Standard.
- Ensure the property is fit for human habitation under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018

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- Meet duties under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and protect tenants from serious hazards identified under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- Meet compliance with the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (known as Awaab's Law) under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.

This policy refers to 'suitable alternative accommodation'; however, detailed criteria for suitability, the assessment process, and the circumstances in which tenants may challenge a suitability decision will be set out clearly within the accompanying procedures.

4.2 Types of Move due to adverse incidents

a) Emergency Decant (Unplanned):

Immediate move required to protect life, health, or safety due to risks such as:

- Fire, flood, explosion or major leak
- Structural failure or collapse
- Emergency repairs including serious damp, mould or environmental hazard
- Contamination (e.g. asbestos, sewage, chemical hazard)

b) Temporary Decant (Planned or Unplanned):

Short-term move while repairs, works or investigations are carried out and that cannot be carried out with the tenant in occupation.

The tenant will return to their home once it is safe and works are complete.

c) Permanent move: Direct Match or Management Let

Where the home cannot be safely or reasonably restored (e.g., demolition, long-term structural issues). Or where a temporary move is not deemed appropriate for the household due to personal circumstances and/or vulnerability.

Permanent rehousing follows the Housing Allocation Policy, which allows Direct Match or Management Let allocations under certain circumstances

Legally, during a decant the landlord must ensure:

- the alternative accommodation is suitable,
- tenants' rights (including security of tenure) are protected during temporary decants,
- relevant compensation is paid (e.g. disturbance or home loss payments), and
- the move is handled with clear communication, fairness, respect and appropriate support.

NB Compensation is not awarded for all decants and will only be awarded through either home loss legislation, or under St Leger Homes Compensation and Goodwill Policy.

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5. Principals of decanting

5.1 Our approach to decanting is guided by a set of core principles designed to ensure that every decision is fair, transparent and centred on tenant safety and wellbeing. These principles underpin how we assess, plan and deliver decants, ensuring consistency and dignity for all households involved. These include:

- **Safety First:** Homes must be safe and meet SLHD and statutory standards.
- **Fairness & Dignity:** Tenants treated with respect; decisions evidence-based and transparent.
- **Consistency:** Clear processes followed across all teams.
- **Proportionality:** Decisions consider vulnerability, medical needs, caring responsibilities, equality requirements and household composition.
- **Communication:** Single Point of Contact to provide timely, clear updates in accessible formats with customers and all parties involved in the decant.
- **Support:** Welfare and tenancy sustainability needs assessed and supported.
- **Financial Fairness:** Appropriate compensation and disturbance allowances provided.
- **Record Keeping:** Accurate documentation and audit trails maintained.

6. Rent Liability During Temporary Decants

6.1 During a temporary decant, tenants remain responsible for paying rent on the lower of the two rents. SLHD will cover the cost of the additional rent (e.g., hotel, serviced accommodation or temporary SLHD property) where required. Tenants will not be subject to dual rent liability.

6.2 If an insurance claim is made to recover temporary accommodation costs, this does not affect the tenant's liability for rent on their permanent tenancy. Where insurance does not cover the full cost of the temporary accommodation, SLHD will not seek to recover any shortfall from the tenant.

6.3 Rent liability arrangements will always be confirmed in writing within the Written Move Plan to ensure full clarity and avoid confusion.

6.4 If tenants' source their own temporary accommodation, such as with family or friends, rent on their tenancy will NOT be payable whilst it is not fit for habitation.

6.5 Once the property is deemed fit to return to, and the tenant has been given reasonable notice to return, rent liability will immediately become payable.

6.6 If a tenant is relocated to an alternative St Leger Homes property under a temporary tenancy agreement, and either unreasonably delays or refuses to return once the property is deemed fit to return, rent will be charged on both the original tenancy and the temporary tenancy, imposing dual liability.

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7. Our Commitment to Tenants

- 7.1 Our aim is to make the decant process as smooth, transparent and respectful as possible, minimising disruption while safeguarding tenant wellbeing and maintaining safe homes.

During any decant, SLHD will:

- Provide clear, timely, accessible communication about:
 - the need for decanting
 - timescales involved
 - available options
 - support available
- Ensure all tenants receive suitable alternative accommodation based on household size, medical needs, vulnerability, and other relevant circumstances
- Protect tenants' rights to security of tenure during temporary decants
- Provide appropriate financial compensation, in line with legal requirements
- Offer support with removals and storage where required
- Compensate tenants for 'reasonable expenses' associated with decanting.
- Provide a named officer as a single point of contact throughout the process e.g. Housing Officer
- Work closely with Housing Options and partners (Adult/Children's Services, contractors) to coordinate the decant effectively.

8. Legislation and related policies

- 8.1 This policy should be read with the following documents (as identified in SLHD corporate policy suite):

- Housing Act 1985
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Housing Act 2004 & HHSRS
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Land Compensation Act 1973
- Equality Act 2010
- Regulatory Standards (RSH)
- Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code
- SLHD Repairs & Maintenance Policy
- SLHD Damp and Mould Policy
- SLHD Fire Safety Management Policy
- SLHD No Access Policy
- SLHD Compensation & Goodwill Policy
- SLHD Housing & Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Secure Tenancy Agreement
- Housing Allocation Policy
- SLHD Customer Support and Accessibility Policy

9. Roles and Responsibilities

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- 9.1 The roles and responsibilities of the teams involved in delivering the decant process are detailed in the table below.

Role	Responsibilities
Director of Housing & Customer Services Director of Property Services	Strategic oversight, approval of complex/exceptional decisions
Head of Housing Management (Policy Owner)	Policy implementation & compliance; escalations
Service Manager – Housing Management (Incident Lead)	Lead operational decision-making, manage case, coordinate teams
Repairs Surveyor / Building Surveyor (Technical Lead)	Inspections, safety assessments, HHSRS, works specification, QA checks
Fire & Building Safety Team	Fire risk, building safety advice, liaison with enforcement bodies
Housing Officer	Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Sourcing temporary and permanent accommodation
Tenancy Sustainability Team	Support needs, welfare, financial assessments
Safeguarding & ASB Team	Risk assessments, multi-agency liaison, vulnerable cases
Customer Access / Communications	Letters, updates, communication planning
Business Support	Removals, storage, logistics, documentation
Finance	Approvals for compensation, disturbance and home loss payments

10. Decant Process

10.1 Step 1: Incident Triage (within 4 hours)

- Make safe, evacuate if needed.
- Log incident and appoint Incident Lead.
- Capture vulnerabilities and safeguarding concerns.
- Initial communication to tenant.

10.2 Step 2: Inspection & Habitability Decision (within 24 hours)

- Surveyor conducts inspection and HHSRS assessment.
- Decision on whether decant is necessary.
- Written decision provided to tenant.

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10.3 Step 3: Accommodation & Move (within 48 hours of decision/ 24 hours for emergency hazards under Awaab's Law)

- Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Housing Officer identified and customer advised
- Temporary accommodation identified via Housing Officer
- Removals, storage, utilities, pets' arrangements coordinated.
- Disturbance payment eligibility assessed.
- Written Move Plan issued (Form detailed at Appendix 1)

10.4 Step 4: Repairs & Works Management

- Works ordered, monitored and updated regularly.
- Weekly updates to SPOC to provide to tenant
- Quality assurance inspection on completion.

10.5 Step 5: Returning Home or Permanent Rehousing

- Return move arranged or:
- Permanent rehousing initiated (if required).
- Home loss and disturbance compensation applied as appropriate.

10.6 Step 6: Closure & Learning

- Case reviewed and closed by Incident Lead.
- Lessons learned to be analysed as appropriate and shared with EMT/Board.

11. Ending a Temporary Decant and Returning Home

- 11.1 Once works are completed, SLHD will conduct a quality assurance inspection and confirm the return-home date in writing where appropriate, giving tenants reasonable notice where possible.
- 11.2 Tenants are expected to vacate hotel or temporary accommodation on the agreed date. SLHD will arrange removals, and reconnection of utilities as required.
- 11.3 If a tenant refuses to return to their repaired home without a valid reason (e.g., medical or safety reasons supported by evidence), SLHD will review the case and if necessary, will take legal action. Legal action will always be a last resort and St Leger Homes will do everything possible to negate the need for this. As per paragraph 6.6, tenants will become liable for rental on both properties in these circumstances.
- 11.4 Where a tenant is vulnerable or requires additional support in the decant process or support to return home, reasonable adjustments will be made and documented as part of the decant Move Plan and or the decant return-home plan.

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12. Communication standards

12.1 The following communication standards set out the minimum expectations for how and when we will communicate with tenants during a decant.

- Initial acknowledgement: within 4 hours
- Inspection decision: within 24 hours of inspection
- Identification of Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Housing Officer
- Written Move Plan: within 24 hours of decant decision
- Weekly updates: minimum standard
- Return home confirmation: within 24 hours of works sign off
- Accessible formats: available on request

**** If a problem is identified as an emergency under Awaab's Law, we will speed up how quickly it is dealt with.**

13. Accommodation standards during decant

13.1 When a decant is required, we will consider all suitable temporary accommodation options available to us, including the following:

- Hotel and Airbnb accommodation which simply means booked, short-term accommodation provided through Airbnb or similar providers, used to ensure a tenant is safely housed during works or emergencies.
- SLHD property – if unfurnished, we will assist with moving tenants belongings from permanent home, where possible
- SLHD Temporary Accommodation unit – furnished to basic standard

13.2 Where tenants choose to stay temporarily with family or friends, this will be treated as an approved form of temporary accommodation, subject to an assessment of suitability. Tenants may still be eligible for agreed disturbance payments and applicable allowances, and the arrangements will be confirmed in writing. SLHD will record the suitability check and ensure tenants understand what support and reimbursement they can access.”

13.3 Alongside this, we will communicate with tenants in line with the following standards:

Temporary accommodation must:

- Be suitable for household size, mobility, medical and cultural needs.
- Consider proximity to schools, carers, employment and support networks.
- Meet safety standards and allow reasonable occupation.

14.0 Health, Safety and Welfare Checks During Decant Accommodation

14.1 SLHD recognises that hotel or emergency accommodation can create additional risks for certain tenants, including children, older adults, disabled tenants, and those with heightened support needs.

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- 14.2 A welfare assessment will be carried out at the point of decant to identify whether welfare checks are required during the temporary stay.
- 14.3 Where required, SLHD will implement a welfare-check plan that may include:
- Regular phone or in-person check-ins
 - Additional visits for families with young children
 - Support from Tenancy Sustainability, Safeguarding or partner agencies
 - Liaison with hotel/accommodation providers to ensure safety and accessibility
- 14.4 Any safeguarding concerns identified during the decant period will be escalated immediately in line with SLHD safeguarding procedures.

15. Disturbance Payments

- 15.1 These are intended to compensate tenants for 'reasonable expenses' associated with moving. Where applicable, SLHD will provide Disturbance payments which can include:
- Reasonable removal costs
 - Disconnection and reconnection of appliances
 - In cases where there is no pre-payment meter, we will assess utilities on a case by case basis.
 - Council Tax will continue to be covered on the main tenancy while the customer is out of the property during the decant period.
 - Re-direction of mail
 - The provision of carpets and curtains in temporary accommodation, where items are not reusable and where appropriate.
 - Storage of furniture and effects if in temporary accommodation such as hotel accommodation
 - Where the tenant is decanted into accommodation without cooking facilities i.e. Hotel accommodation then a meal allowance will be provided for each of the household members.
 - Where the tenant is decanted into accommodation with a no pets policy, in exceptional circumstances assistance may be provided towards the costs of temporary boarding of pets into kennels/ catteries.

16. Home loss Payment

- 16.1 This is for permanent decants only which is a statutory fixed sum paid in recognition of the personal upset and distress caused by displacement. SLHD makes no commitment to provide payments for displacement beyond the statutory requirement. A person cannot be regarded as permanently displaced if there is an intention to return to their original home on completion of the works.

Home loss payment will be paid following deductions of:

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- Any rent arrears against the property (including former tenant arrears)
- Any court costs regarding the tenancy
- Any garage rent arrears owed by the tenant
- Any Council Tax arrears in respect of the property
- Any re-charges in relation to property damage, caused either deliberately or through neglect.

16.2 For tenants who receive Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support, any Home Loss payments that they receive will be counted as capital for the purpose of these benefits. It is the legal responsibility of tenants to advise the City of Doncaster Council's Tax and Benefits Team as soon as they receive any Home Loss payment. Similarly, any Home Loss Payment may affect entitlement to Universal Credit, and the onus rests with Council Tenants to inform the Department of Work and Pensions/Local Jobcentre Plus that they have received this payment.

16.3 SLHD makes payments in accordance with the Home Loss Payments (Prescribed Amounts) (England) Regulations (2023). These regulations are updated annually and will be checked before any payment is agreed. For this reason, the level of statutory payments is not set out within this document as it is likely that these amounts will change during the lifespan of this policy.

16.4 All financial aspects of a decant, including disturbance payments, home loss payments, storage costs and temporary accommodation charges, will be managed through SLHD's established financial controls. This includes formal authorisation of payments, monitoring of expenditure against budget, and processes to prevent fraud or error. All costs will be recorded, verified and subject to internal audit and EMT/Board assurance.

17. Tenant responsibilities

17.1 Tenants remain responsible for personal contents insurance and payment of the rent on the lower of the two rents.

Rent will be covered on one of the other properties by SLHD and in some circumstances due to the nature of the decant may be covered through insurance.

Tenants are expected to:

- Pay Council Tax on the temporary property
- Pay utilities on the temporary property
- Co-operate with inspections, surveys, and contractor appointments
- Pack belongings where they are able to do so
- Provide accurate information about their needs
- Keep SLHD updated about any changes in household circumstances

Support will be offered to vulnerable tenants.

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18. Supporting Vulnerable Tenants and Making Reasonable Adjustments

18.1 SLHD is committed to ensuring that all tenants, including those with vulnerabilities or additional needs, are supported appropriately throughout the decant process. In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Housing Ombudsman's Attitudes, Respect and Rights report, we will identify, record and implement reasonable adjustments to remove barriers and ensure tenants can fully understand, participate in, and manage the decant process.

18.2 Identifying Vulnerability and Additional Needs

SLHD will proactively identify potential vulnerabilities that may impact a tenant's ability to engage with the decant process, including (but not limited to):

- disability, long-term health conditions or mental ill-health
- sensory impairments or communication needs
- learning disabilities, cognitive impairment or diminished capacity
- literacy, language or cultural factors
- domestic abuse, safeguarding or exploitation risks
- severe financial hardship or social isolation

Housing Officers and partner services will record any known or emerging vulnerabilities at the earliest stage and update these throughout the decant process.

18.3 Reasonable Adjustments

Where vulnerabilities or additional needs are identified, SLHD will implement reasonable adjustments to ensure tenants are not disadvantaged in line with the Customer Support and Accessibility Policy. These may include:

- providing information in accessible formats (easy read, large print, translated materials)
- additional time and support for decision-making
- face-to-face meetings instead of written communication
- involving advocates, carers or support workers
- arranging alternative viewing methods (e.g., video walk-throughs)
- offering enhanced welfare checks during hotel or emergency accommodation stays
- providing practical support with packing, removals or storage where a tenant cannot reasonably do this themselves

18.4 Recording and Reviewing Adjustments

All agreed adjustments will be documented on the tenant's case record and reflected in the Written Move Plan. Adjustments will be reviewed regularly, particularly if circumstances change, to ensure they remain appropriate and effective.

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18.5 Link to Safeguarding

Where a tenant's vulnerability indicates potential risk of harm, staff must follow SLHD safeguarding procedures. Any concerns about a tenant's safety, exploitation, mental capacity or wellbeing will be escalated promptly to the Safeguarding & ASB Team for assessment. Multi-agency working will be coordinated where required (e.g., Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health professionals).

Decision-Making and Oversight

All decisions involving vulnerable tenants will be taken with careful consideration of risk, dignity and proportionality. Cases involving significant vulnerability, escalating risk or complex needs may be escalated to the Service Manager or Head of Service for oversight.

19. Decision Criteria

19.1 A decant will be authorised when:

- A property is **unsafe** or **uninhabitable**.
- Staying would pose risk due to **health hazards** (damp & mould, contamination, electrical, fire).
- Works required cannot be completed safely while occupied.
- Emergency services or statutory authorities require temporary removal.
- The property is subject to long-term structural instability, demolition or regeneration.

20. Complaints and Appeals

20.1 In the event of a dispute about a decant decision or the suitability of alternative accommodation, SLHD will follow a clear internal escalation route, Team Leader → Service Manager → Head of Service, before progressing to the formal complaints process. This provides an opportunity for an operational review and early resolution in line with best practice.

20.2 We are committed to providing clear routes for tenants to raise formal complaints or appeal decisions. The following section outlines how concerns will be handled and escalated.

A tenant who remains dissatisfied may:

- Appeal a decant decision or suitability of accommodation.
- Use SLHD's Complaints Policy and Housing Ombudsman processes.
- Receive clear reasons for decisions and any appeal outcomes.

21. Data Protection

21.1 All personal information will be managed in accordance with:

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- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- SLHD Information Governance policies

Temporary accommodation locations will always be treated as confidential.

22. Governance and reporting

22.1 SLHD will report to EMT and Board:

- Number and type of decants
- Duration
- Costs
- Lessons learned
- Themes arising from complaints, Ombudsman findings, and adverse incidents

23. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION & TRAINING

- Training for all staff involved in decant processes.
- With regular refresher training.
- Lessons learned incorporated into continuous improvement plans.

24. Equality impact assessment

24.1 A full EIA has been completed. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for this policy, following SLHD's equality analysis process. The assessment considered the potential impact on all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and reviewed available evidence, tenant feedback, complaints data, and the outcomes of consultation with staff, partners and tenant groups. The analysis also examined whether any groups could be disproportionately affected, whether additional support or reasonable adjustments would be needed, and whether the policy could unintentionally create barriers for tenants with specific needs.

24.2 The EIA found no negative or discriminatory impacts for any protected group. It confirms that no tenants would be disadvantaged by the implementation of this policy and that the policy is fair, inclusive and accessible. The assessment also noted that the policy strengthens clarity, transparency and consistency for tenants, and supports SLHD's commitments to equality, good practice and legal compliance.

25. Ownership and Responsibilities

25.1 The ownership and responsibility of managing the implementation and relevance of this policy will remain with the Head of Housing Management. However, the application of the policy will apply to all Service areas as feature of our service offer.

26. Procedures

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- 26.1 Procedures developed to support this Policy will consider recommendations contained in The Housing Ombudsman’s Spotlight Report on ‘*Attitudes, rights and respect*’. Our approach will embed inclusive practices that reflect the diverse needs of tenants, including those with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or those experiencing significant life events. We will also strengthen transparency by maintaining robust records of all requests and decisions, with regular review to ensure fairness and consistency.

27. Commitment to Ongoing Improvement

- 27.1 This policy sets out SLHD’s clear and consistent approach to managing all decant situations, ensuring that tenants are supported, treated fairly, and kept safe when a move from their home is necessary. Decanting will always be a last resort, used only when a property cannot be safely occupied or when essential works cannot be carried out with tenants in place.
- 27.2 Through this policy, SLHD commits to providing suitable alternative accommodation, clear communication, appropriate compensation, and tailored support particularly for vulnerable households. The policy also reflects learning from Housing Ombudsman determinations and feedback from tenants who have experienced the decant process, ensuring continual improvement in how we deliver this service.
- 27.3 SLHD will continue to monitor the impact of this policy, review its effectiveness, and ensure it remains compliant with legislation, regulatory standards, and best practice. Our aim is to make the decant process as smooth, transparent and respectful as possible, minimising disruption while safeguarding tenant wellbeing and maintaining safe, high-quality homes.

27.4 Analysis of Tenant Satisfaction Measures

As a learning organisation, we will continually monitor the quality of the decant service we provide, using analysis of Tenant Satisfaction Measures, transactional survey feedback and wider customer insight to identify improvements and ensure the service remains fair, consistent and responsive to tenant needs.

How we’ll collect and triangulate insight

- Tenant Perception Measures (TP01–TP12): We will tag decanted households (where possible) to compare their satisfaction against the wider SLHD baseline and identify any gaps needing action.
- Management Information Measures: We will review complaint timeliness and resolution (MI-based TSMs) for decant cases to check process reliability and right-first-time outcomes.
- Transactional surveys and “You Said, We Did”: Short, post-decant surveys and qualitative feedback will be mapped to the TSM themes to

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capture specific service improvements (e.g., removals, storage, communication cadence).

28. Background Document/Research:

- The Housing Ombudsman provides a Spotlight report 23 January 2024, on *Attitudes, Respect and Rights* which examines what "vulnerability" means in social housing and how landlords can better serve vulnerable residents, which is closely linked to the requirement for reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. While there isn't a separate, dedicated Spotlight report on the broader concept of decanting customers specifically, the Ombudsman's overall learning from wider order reports and publications does emphasise the need for landlords to make reasonable adjustments for residents with disabilities, as detailed in their Complaint Handling Code.
- Learning from Housing Ombudsman determinations, alongside feedback from tenants who have been decanted, highlights the importance of clear communication, timely updates, accurate record-keeping, consistent decision-making, and ensuring that tenants fully understand the reasons for a decant, the support available, and what to expect throughout the process. These findings reinforce the need for early engagement, stronger coordination across teams, and a more customer-focused approach that prevents avoidable anxiety, delays, and dissatisfaction.
- Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

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Appendix 1

WRITTEN MOVE PLAN (DECANT) – TEMPLATE FORM

This Written Move Plan must be completed for every decant (temporary or permanent).

A copy must be provided to the tenant and saved to the tenancy record.

1. Tenant & Household Details

Tenant Name(s): _____

Address of Affected Property: _____

Contact Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Household Members (including ages & vulnerabilities/needs):

Name Age Relationship Additional needs (medical, accessibility, safeguarding)

2. Reason for Decant

Type of Decant Required (tick):

☐ Temporary decant

☐ Emergency decant

Reason for Decant (summary):

(e.g. fire, flood, disrepair, major works, safety concern, structural issues)

Evidence/Assessment Completed:

(e.g. survey report, HHSRS, fire report, contractor assessment)

3. Works Required / Timescales

Works Needed to the Property:

Estimated Start Date of Works: _____

Estimated Completion Date: _____

Expected Date Tenant Can Return (for temporary decants):

4. Temporary / Alternative Accommodation

Option(s) Offered to Tenant:

☐ SLHD property

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- ☐ B&B
- ☐ Hotel
- ☐ Private sector leased property
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Address of Temporary Accommodation (if known):

Why this accommodation is suitable (household size, medical needs, location, accessibility):

Type of Tenancy/Agreement for Temporary Accommodation:

5. Removals, Storage & Belongings

Support Offered:

- ☐ Removals arranged
- ☐ Storage arranged
- ☐ Tenant choosing to self-move

Details of Arrangements:

Furniture or Equipment Supplied (if any):

6. Financial Support & Compensation

Eligible Payments (where applicable):

- ☐ Home Loss Payment (permanent decant)
- ☐ Disturbance Payment (reasonable expenses)
- ☐ Goodwill/Discretionary Payment
- ☐ Travel/meal allowances (if applicable)
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

Details of Agreed Payments / Reimbursements:

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7. Tenant Rights & Key Information (discussed and confirmed)

- ☐ Security of tenure protected during temporary decant
- ☐ Rent liability explained (including responsibilities for two properties if applicable)
- ☐ How to report repairs while decanted
- ☐ How works/progress updates will be communicated
- ☐ Support available from SLHD and partners (Housing Options, Adult/Children's Services)
- ☐ Complaint routes explained

(Officer to ensure this section is explained clearly.)

8. Single Point of Contact

Named Officer: _____

Role: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

9. Communication Plan

How often will updates be provided?

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Other: _____

Method(s):

- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Text
- ☐ Home visit
- ☐ Other: _____

10. Tenant Agreement / Comments

Tenant Comments or Questions:

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Tenant Confirmation:

I confirm that the information above has been discussed with me and I have received a copy of this Written Move Plan.

Tenant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Officer Signature: _____ Date: _____

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