

Camden's Community  
Investment Programme

# Information for **Secure Tenants**



Estate Regeneration, Gospel Oak and Haverstock



### What regeneration means for you – Camden tenants

#### Camden People's Regeneration Pledge for Secure Tenants – key points

- You will remain a Camden secure tenant
- If you choose to stay, you will be guaranteed a newly built home on the estate at a social rent level with the same tenancy conditions as you have now
- You will receive compensation for having to move and be repaid the costs of moving (see details below)
- We will work with you to help you make informed decisions about your future housing options
- We will work with you to minimise any disturbance to you and your family
- You will be involved every step of the way in designing the new homes and neighbourhood, from the layout of new flats to the design of open spaces

- If you need to be rehoused during redevelopment, you will remain in Camden –either on your estate or in another council home in Camden to suit your housing needs and, unless you move into another newly built council home, you will have a right to return to your original estate.

If, following engagement with residents (which in some cases may include a ballot), the Council proceeds with regeneration of a housing estate, we will meet with all tenants individually to discuss your needs and what the impact of redevelopment might mean for you and your family. Our offer to every secure tenant and their household will be slightly different to reflect your household's different needs, but some of the core commitments we make to all tenants are the following.

#### When will I be told what is happening to my estate?

The Council will be open and transparent with residents when it is considering developing

plans for the regeneration of an estate. This is not only to allow people as much time as possible to plan, but also so that all residents can be involved in the design of new homes and other new facilities such as play spaces and landscaping.

Where the Council is considering demolishing some homes in order to deliver the maximum benefit from estate regeneration, then we will discuss the available options with residents.

Where a proposed scheme is large, for example building over 150 homes and demolishing existing council homes, the Council will carry out a ballot of all estate residents. If a majority of the residents who vote are in favour of the proposals, then regeneration will proceed. For more information on ballots please see the separate leaflet.

#### Rehousing

Before development takes place, a full housing needs survey of the homes on the affected estate will be completed to understand

the specific requirements of all existing residents to ensure that the Council has the right information to be able to properly support you and your neighbours and to ensure that the regeneration of your estate can be carried out in line with the Council's Pledges.

If your council home is demolished you will be able choose one of the following options:

#### Move straight into one of the new homes built

If new homes are built on your estate we will aim, as far as possible, for the new homes to be completed before old ones are demolished, so that secure tenants only have to move once.

#### Accept a temporary rehousing offer but have the option to return to the new homes when construction is complete

All council tenants on the estate would be awarded regeneration decant points and can bid using Camden's Home Connections online bidding service. You will be told when you will be able



to start bidding; it will be after a ballot has taken place.

If you want to stay in the same area, for example because of schooling or caring for a family member, we will work with you to find a suitable property. This will depend on the number of properties available, which match your assessed need, at any given time. We will work with you to find you a home that matches your family's needs.

If you choose to move to another newly built council home elsewhere in Camden, then you will not be able to return. Your move would be permanent.

### **Get regeneration decant points to bid for other homes in your local area or in Camden**

All council tenants on the estate would be awarded regeneration decant points and can bid using Camden's Home Connections online bidding service. You will be told when you will be able to start bidding; it will be after a ballot has taken place.

You can bid on another property as a permanent move. This

might be attractive to you if there is somewhere else in Camden you would like to live because of family, friends, employment or schooling.

### **Pursue an alternative housing option that might be available to a secure tenant**

For example, some tenants may be eligible for the Mayor of London's Seaside and Country Homes Scheme (residents over the age of 60). As a secure tenant you might also wish to consider alternative provision of housing such as extra-care, if this might better suit your needs.

### **Who is eligible for support during the moving and rehousing process?**

You are entitled to support for rehousing or assistance during any estate regeneration if you are one of the following:

- You are a secure or joint tenant of the Council
- If you are a long-term cohabiting partner of a tenant
- You are a dependent child who normally lives with a tenant

- You are an adult relative who lives with a tenant because you have support needs and cannot live independently
- You are a live-in carer for a tenant

Single person households occupying a one bedroom property at the time of decanting will be eligible for a one bedroom flat – you will not be expected to move into a studio.

When finding you a new home, either permanently or temporarily, we will look to provide you with the correct number of bedrooms to meet your assessed housing need – you will not be moved to a home in which you would be regarded as overcrowded. If you have adult children living with you, we can work with them to discuss what entitlement they might have to accessing housing in the local area as part of a local lettings plan. This is subject to Housing Allocation's verification process.

Where relevant, please refer to the adopted local lettings plan

for the regeneration of your estate.

### **Specialist or accessible accommodation**

If you need an accessible or adapted property we will work with you to make sure that your new home meets your needs. This might require a health and housing assessment to identify which of the following might work for you:

- Wheelchair accessible homes – a home that is fully accessible to and throughout the property for a wheelchair
- Step-free with wider doorways and corridors – a home that is accessible throughout if you use an attendant propelled wheelchair or a mobility frame. You might be able to access another level of the property with a stair-lift.
- Step-free accommodation – a home that is step-free (might include a stair-lift)
- Minimal steps – a home with up to six steps

We will also work with you during moving and move-in to



complete any adaptations you might need.

### **Tenancy**

Your tenancy will remain the same throughout regeneration even if you move away, and then move back into a new home. If you started the process as a Camden secure tenant, you will end the process as a Camden secure tenant. However if you are on an introductory tenancy, this will move with you to the new home before you move onto a secure tenancy.

### **Compensation for moving and disturbance costs**

If you have lived in your council home for over 12 months, you will be entitled to receive a home loss payment – the amount of this is set by Government and is currently £6,400 (October 2019). You will only receive this payment once. If you are temporarily relocated during regeneration and then move back to a new home on your estate it is important to note you will not receive this payment twice. But for each

move we will assist you with the costs associated with moving to a new home. The statutory home loss payment will be paid directly to the named tenant. Claims can be made for up to six years after the offer of accommodation and you may be entitled to an advance payment of at least part of the total payment.

If you need to move you will get help with costs. This can include things like the cost of disconnecting and reconnecting a washing machine, redirecting mail and removals. You can receive disturbance payments more than once if you have to move multiple times. The Council will discuss with you in more detail in advance of moving what is and isn't covered by a disturbance payment.

### **Rents on your new home**

When you move to a new council home, you will pay the target rent for this home. The rents for the new homes will be calculated in the same format used across the borough. Camden uses the

national government formula and guidelines for calculating council rents based on the type and location of the property you are renting. This might be more or less than you currently pay; it will depend on the size and location of the new home. We will discuss this with you before you move to make sure you that you are able to pay the rent. We will work with you to ensure that you are getting all the financial help you are entitled to.

### **What should I do if I have rent arrears?**

If you have rent arrears we encourage you to discuss this with your housing officer and community liaison officer as soon as possible. Rent arrears do not affect your entitlement to receive support, access an alternative home during the redevelopment and return to a new home on your estate once it has been built. If you have rent arrears at the point at which you need to move, the Council will deduct the arrears from the statutory home loss payment you receive.

### **What happens if I don't agree to move?**

If we proceed with a proposed scheme, which residents have voted for in a ballot, then where secure tenants refuse the offers of suitable alternative accommodation and in circumstances where rehousing by negotiation and voluntary agreement has not been possible, the Council will exercise its legal right to seek possession under the Housing Act 1985.

### **What advice and support can I get?**

If you have any concerns, our council officers are available to support you and provide advice and information. They can:

- Provide general advice or signpost or refer you to specialist support, for example:
  - Housing options
  - Accessing a solicitor and getting information on legal rights
  - Benefits entitlement
  - Completing forms and legal paperwork
  - Assistance and advice on





how to move home and the bidding process

- Assistance in viewing any property offered
- Clearance of unwanted items
- Support for vulnerable residents – if you are an older resident or have support needs and might have difficulty with the move, extra support will be offered

### What happens to new council homes on my estate that are not used to rehouse original tenants?

The Council will prepare a local lettings plan in consultation with residents. This will set out how any new homes will be allocated. Wherever possible the Council will use the policy as set out in its adopted Housing Allocation Scheme (2018).

### The Camden People’s Regeneration Pledge

- **Building more social homes** - There will be no net loss of council homes in Camden - more council homes will be built under the Community

Investment Programme (CIP) as well as new Living Rent homes for key workers and families on low incomes.

- **Right to Stay and Right to Return** - Camden tenants will not be moved out of the borough during regeneration and will be given priority on new council flats built. If tenants choose to stay, they will be guaranteed a home on the new estate at a social rent level with the same tenancy conditions as they have now. A housing needs assessment will ensure tenants are provided with a new home that meets their requirements whether that is wheelchair accessibility or other adaptations or more bedrooms to address overcrowding. If they move away during regeneration, they will have a right to return, unless they move into another home newly built by Camden.
- **A fair offer for leaseholders** - Leaseholders will be compensated for loss of their property at market value plus a statutory compensation.

If resident leaseholders wish to buy into the new scheme, where the new property is more expensive than the sale price of their existing home, they will be able to do so by means of a shared equity option. Thereafter, homes for sale will be marketed first to local people and key workers.

- **Support to move** - To reduce disruption to individuals and families, residents will receive financial compensation and paid reasonable disturbance costs.
- **Community-led regeneration** - Camden believes that estate regeneration schemes should proceed only with the support of the majority of estate residents. Camden is committed to ensuring that residents have a continuing opportunity to feedback and have their voice heard on schemes – this includes opportunities to say whether they think schemes should proceed.
- **Designing your new home and neighbourhood** - Tenants and resident leaseholders will

be involved every step of the way in designing their new homes and neighbourhoods, from the layout of new flats to the design of open spaces. We are committed to working together to design schemes and to involve estate residents in all aspects of developing new homes, so they are designed by residents, for residents.

- **Protecting our vibrant and mixed communities** - The private development market is failing Camden. Camden has to step-in. As a direct builder we can do more than other developers by prioritising council housing and social benefit. We are creating developments to maintain Camden’s unique social mix and ensure the borough remains a place for everyone. Camden will deliver more than other developers can and prioritise:
  - Social rented housing,
  - Camden Living Rent,
- **Placeshaping** - As part of CIP we will also improve the wider



area and as part of schemes deliver high quality new community facilities, where required.

- **Funding our building programme** - We will only build private homes to fund regeneration. All of the money raised from sales or from private renting homes through the Camden Collection will be redistributed into the building of new council and Living Rent homes, other community facilities as part of CIP or used to help fund improvements to existing council homes through our Better Homes Programme.
- **Ballots** - We will ballot residents on any estate regeneration proposals that involve the demolition of existing social rent homes and the construction of over 150 homes to ensure that everyone understands and agrees with the offer that the Council is making to them, which will be in line with the Camden People's Regeneration Pledges.

### Getting more information

This booklet is a continuation of our conversations with all residents – not the end. It does not provide all the details you will need to make an informed decision about your options and does not include the detail about the proposals for your estate.

We hope this booklet helps address some initial questions or concerns that you may have regarding the process of estate regeneration. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the CIP development and community engagement team for your estate.

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/community-investment-programme>