

Supported move (decant) policy

Who's this for?	Colleagues and affected residents
Document status	Final
Date created	May 2015
Last updated	July 2023
To be reviewed	November 2024
Policy Owner	Director of Housing
Other related documents	Customer strategy Common Housing allocation scheme policy Customer care and complaint resolution policy Vulnerable customers policy Asset review procedure Tenancy policy

Policy statement

At settle, our purpose is to help customers live comfortably in their homes. We aim to undertake repair and improvement work with minimal disruption to customers. Sometimes though it is necessary to move customers temporarily to undertake major repairs to their home which cannot be done in occupation. Under these circumstances, settle customers will be entitled to compensation for disturbance.

There may also be circumstances where customers are required to move permanently, for example due to a change of property use or redevelopment plan. Under these circumstances the customer may be eligible for a home loss payment under current legislation. Where a customer has an outstanding debt to settle, we will offset any home loss payment against the debt.

Current position

We have completed 16 supported moves where we have identified major repairs being required into other settle homes over the last 2 years. In these cases, customers have chosen to move permanently due to the extent of the works required. We will work collaboratively between teams to ensure we plan the move effectively and minimise the impact this has on our customers, providing any additional support where needed.

We regularly review our disturbance package and have a comfort fund available for those without contents insurance. We have identified that many of our customers do not have contents insurance and in serious events like fire have been left with nothing. settle has sourced contents insurance with Aviva for all settle customers at discounted rates. We will continue to promote and monitor uptake.

Where regeneration programmes are underway, customers affected are consulted. We have set up residents working groups, send regular newsletters and have a dedicated officer working with our customers.

We have also established new working partnerships with local removal companies, to support our customers.

We have seen an increase in cases where short term moves are required for a period of less than 12 weeks. We have introduced two designated properties to support customers who need to move temporarily. This ensures our customers can continue to live within the North Herts area more comfortably. Where needed, we use both local hotels and Air B&Bs for families with young children. We provide food vouchers and travel expenses.

As a result of customer feedback, we have written a procedure to ensure colleagues are clear on the options available and what they are required to do. We offer customers a license to occupy our temporary designated units for the duration of their stay, as their tenancy of their principal home is unaffected.

We offer like to like tenancies to customers that are required to move permanently.

Key principles

- We act in line with all statutory and regulatory obligations
- We are transparent about the temporary move process, so customers are aware of what to expect
- We communicate proactively and work closely with the household being moved to ensure our approach is tailored to their individual needs
- We recognise that moving home can be a disruptive and stressful experience, so we act with empathy to ensure a positive relationship is maintained between us and the household being moved
- We are fair and consistent in how we assess compensation for disturbance

Objectives

- To provide our customers with alternative accommodation and disturbance compensation to enable settle to complete essential repair, improvement or redevelopment works
- To recognise that the need to move is a significant event for a household and to make this process as smooth as possible
- To provide a clear and consistent approach to temporary moves for customers and colleagues

Policy action

- Review our approach to communicating with customers who we need to temporarily move
- Create a process to ensure we provide decanted households with a schedule of works and timescales
- Develop a survey to gather feedback on the experience of being temporarily moved
- Develop a framework for how we calculate disturbance payments
- Ensure we have clear procedures in place to recognise when a household will need to be temporarily moved so that we can act on it at the earliest possible moment
- Raise colleague awareness of the temporary move process

Desired outcomes

- Frontline colleagues are confident in recognising when a temporary move is the right approach for a household
- Customers feel supported and are confident that their views and needs are fully considered throughout the temporary move
- Our approach is clear and transparent to colleagues and customers

Performance indicators

- Effort score below 3.5
- Trust score above 8

- 90% customer satisfaction with repairs

Key legislation

- The Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Land Compensation Act 1973
- The Local Government and Planning Act 1980
- The Planning and Compensation Act 1991
- Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood Tenancy Standard

Review

The policy is reviewed every two years or when there are any changes to legislation. The policy may also be reviewed prior to the start of any major regeneration activity or if the level of use increases for other reasons.