



Metropolitan
Thames Valley

Decant Charter

FOR TENANTS



Decant charter

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Decanting is the process of moving tenants to another property because their home is going to be demolished or because they cannot stay in their homes whilst major refurbishment work is carried out.

Our aims are to:

- To provide a nominated member of the Resident Liaison Team to support you through the decant process
- only move someone once, if their home is to be demolished
- pre-allocate homes as far in advance as possible
- support vulnerable and elderly tenants through the process
- rehouse tenants in homes with the same number of bedrooms unless they are currently under-occupying or overcrowded
- provide a safe, secure environment for all tenants during the process of emptying blocks



When your home is going to be demolished

We will rehouse tenants whose homes are to be demolished on a planned rolling programme to minimise any potential delays in the development programme.

Limiting the number of moves our aim is that tenants will move once through the decant process before moving into their new home. In exceptional circumstances this may not be possible if a suitable alternative home is not available at the time when we need tenants to move out.

RE-HOUSING OPTIONS

We will offer every assured tenant a permanent tenancy of either a newly built or a refurbished rented home on the Clapham Park Estate. We appreciate that many residents may want to live close to their current neighbours and we will make every effort to keep existing communities together if requested.

If requested, and if there is availability, we can consider rehousing residents elsewhere in a property owned by Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing.

OVERCROWDED HOUSEHOLDS

If a tenant considers their home to be overcrowded they will be asked to provide evidence that all members of the household are authorised occupants.

UNDER-OCCUPYING HOUSEHOLDS

Where a tenant has more bedrooms than needed before they are decanted, they will be offered a home with one more bedroom than needed or smaller.



ONE REASONABLE OFFER

One reasonable offer will be made which, wherever possible, will meet tenants' preferences. A reasonable offer takes into account the kind of accommodation that Metropolitan Clapham Park would normally allocate to people with similar needs. Properties on the ground floor or with lift access will be allocated to those least able to manage the stairs (supported if necessary by medical evidence), or to residents with young children.

HOME LOSS AND DISTURBANCE PAYMENTS

Tenants in occupation for more than 12 months before the move will be eligible to receive a home loss payment. This is set by the government and at the time of printing is £6,400. Home loss payments are reviewed periodically but do not increase every year. This payment is only made for one permanent move.

If a tenant has rent arrears, these will be offset against the home loss payment to up to 100% of the value of arrears. Tenants are also entitled to a disturbance payment to cover costs associated with moving. You can find details of what costs can be covered on pages 10 and 11.

What to expect on your moving day and beyond...

WHAT HAPPENS ON YOUR MOVING DAY TO A NEW HOME?

The removal company will arrive at your home at the agreed time. If you are doing your own packing you should be completely packed before they arrive. You should dispose of any rubbish. If you have large bulky items that you do not want, you can leave these in your old home but must tell us that you have done so.

You should take your gas, electric and water meter readings on the day of your move. A member of staff from MTVH will also take these for their records. You will need to contact your utility suppliers to tell them that you have moved.

You will need to return your old keys to the Clapham Park office by 12 noon on the day after you have moved. You will receive a receipt for your keys.

Your Resident Liaison Team will be available to help if there is any further assistance you need in the weeks after you have moved.

You will have a home induction carried out by the Resident Liaison Team and contractors if necessary who will show you where all your utilities and appliances are located and how these are operated.

The Resident Liaison Team will help with the items listed on the following page →



- Help to ensure you understand the moving process
- Removal of your personal belongings by our reliable removal company
- Support with the transfer of utilities for those with support needs
- Prompt processing of home loss and disturbance payments
- Security of vacated properties within 24-48 hours of the keys being returned
- Satisfaction surveys to all tenants who move to ensure we continuously improve our service
- During the sign-up process you will receive information regarding community activities, training, employment and money advice.

The removal team will be responsible for:

- Packing support for people who cannot do it themselves and those with support needs
- Boxes and tape delivered to your property
- Dismantling and reassembling of your furniture where required
- Disconnection and reconnection of appliances by qualified technicians

The allocation of homes

How we prioritise individual rehousing needs of secure tenants who are being decanted

CATEGORY 1:

Tenants in the immediate block(s) to be decanted to allow for demolition or refurbishment to take place.

CATEGORY 2:

Tenants in the later block(s) to be decanted to allow for demolition.

Property sizes allocated to households

Couple/single parent:	double bedroom
Single adult:	single room
Child under 18:	single room
2 children (same sex) aged up to 16:	double bedroom
2 children (different sex) until the oldest is 10:	double bedroom
Anyone with a confirmed medical need for their own bedroom:	single room



Please note that there may be exceptions where a large family has to be rehoused and the property size required is unavailable.

NEW TENANCIES

Where an assured tenant moves to a different home permanently they will receive a new secure tenancy. The rent and service charge will depend on the property they are moving to.

Where the new property has the same number of bedrooms as the old property the rent will be the same. If you move to a smaller property the rent will not exceed what you have already been paying for a larger property. If you move into a larger property the rent will be set at the target rent level. All properties benefit from different services so your service charge will change to reflect those services.

Tenants who have a preserved Right to Buy will retain this if the property they move to is eligible. We will discuss all these details in advance and provide support to make new benefit claims where required.

Disturbance payments

REMOVALS

We will pay for removal expenses using our approved contractors. It is important that tenants have all their items packed in time as, if delays or cancellations occur, we will make a charge, which will be placed on a sundry account. Vulnerable and elderly households will receive additional support during the moving process.

APPLIANCES

We will pay approved companies for the disconnection and reconnection of a gas or electric cooker, washing machine and dishwasher.

TV AERIALS AND SATELLITE DISHES

Satellite dishes are not permitted in new build or refurbished blocks where there are modern communal aerial/satellite dish facilities available to all tenants. We will not pay for satellite dishes to be relocated for temporary moves.



TRAVEL EXPENSES

If tenants are temporarily rehoused off the estate, we will pay reasonable additional travel costs incurred during the period of the displacement.

SPECIAL ADAPTATIONS

We will pay for special adaptations to be refitted to new homes after an assessment has been carried out by an occupational therapist.

SPECIAL EXPENSES

We will consider reimbursing the salary of one adult for lost earnings on removal day (up to a maximum of £150) - suitable certification will be required.

LOCKS AND ALARMS

We will pay the cost of re-fitting tenants' existing high security locks and/or burglar alarms where practical, where they have sought and been given permission to install them. Alternatively we will make an allowance in the Disturbance payment towards their replacement. In both cases this work must be carried out by an approved locksmith or alarm company and items must comply with the relevant British Standards, meet criteria of 'Secured by Design' and be approved by the Fire Brigade.

Burglar alarms must be connected to a serviced call centre and not cause disturbance to other residents. Front door and window grilles are not covered and are not permitted.

TELEPHONE, INTERNET AND MAIL

We will pay for the disconnection and reconnection of your telephone and broadband services. We will also pay for mail to be redirected for three months for a permanent move or for the whole

period of temporary moves.

You are required to provide supporting evidence, i.e a receipt in order to receive a full refund.

UTILITY SERVICES

Tenants are responsible for informing all utility and other service providers about the move from their existing home into their new home, including taking all meter readings needed. This should not incur any additional costs.

If however, you have a pre-paid meter for your gas or electric in your home, you are required to inform your provider to close the account so there are no further standing charges incurred.

FITTED FURNITURE

If required, we will pay for the re-fitting of resident owned furniture, such as fitted wardrobes, into the permanent new home. This is only possible if the items are constructed in such a way that they can be removed and are in a structurally sound condition so that they can be re-assembled and refitted. No allowance will be made for fitted items which cannot be removed.

When your home is going to be refurbished

Tenants will be fully consulted about the works to their home and block.

The costs of the move both ways will be paid by MTVH – please see page 10 for details of eligible costs.

Tenants who have to move out during the works will move temporarily within the area for up to one year. We will offer every secure tenant a permanent tenancy of either a newly built or a refurbished rented home on the Clapham Park Estate.

Tenants will be fully consulted on their temporary alternative accommodation, which will take into account how long they need to move out for and any special needs they may have.

We will provide carpets and curtains in the temporary home where necessary (new carpets and curtains will be provided where we agree that changes to rooms mean that tenants' existing carpets and curtains cannot be adapted and re-used).



EXCEPTIONS

Tenants will usually be able to remain in their home whilst the refurbishment works are being done. Where the tenant's current home is not appropriate to their needs, for example, they are overcrowded, or may be vulnerable and need supported housing, our aim is that they only have to move once. In the case of overcrowding, eligible tenants will have to provide proof of tenancy and evidence that all members of the household are authorised occupants and have lived at the home for more than one year before a move.

Where it is possible for tenants to stay in their home whilst refurbishment work is carried out we will make every effort to minimise disruption. Rooms may be out of use for a short period during the day but will usually be available overnight. If a tenant does lose the use of any rooms or

facilities for one week or more, we will reduce their rent for that week in compensation. The amount is based on the number of complete weeks the room is out of use and the proportion of rent that represents the value of a room. This only applies where no respite facilities are made available.

We will consult in advance with residents affected and agree with them what facilities we will provide, such as temporary tea and coffee making facilities or a temporary refuge.

COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Tenants may be able to claim for improvements they have made (on or after 1 April 1994), that we gave written permission for. Permission(s) given by a previous landlord will be eligible. All claims will be subject to our building surveyor carrying out an inspection to assess the value of the work or fittings.

TENANTS' RIGHTS OF APPEAL

- Accommodation offer: If an offer of accommodation is refused on the grounds that it is unreasonable, the tenant can make an appeal, which is heard by a Senior member of the Housing Services Department. The process is set out in the complaints policy. If the appeal is upheld, one further offer of reasonable accommodation will be made. If the appeal is lost and the household still refuses the offer, they will be served with a Notice of Seeking Possession. This means that we may apply to court for possession of the property in accordance with the 1988 Housing Act, which could result in the tenants being evicted. Unless

the tenant has accepted the tenancy in the property offered. An appeal may also be made against other decisions such as the entitlement to disturbance payments. Disputes relating to the amount of Home Loss payments offset against arrears can be made to the Head of Housing/ Head of Income who have discretion in this matter.

- Disputes about disturbance payments can be dealt with through Metropolitan Thames Valley complaints process or, as a last resort, they can be referred to the Lands Tribunal in accordance with the 1973 Land Compensation Act.





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