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Sycamore Grange Decant Plan – Demolition and Redevelopment Project

Programme of Works

This plan sets out the approach that will be taken to rehouse all current tenants from Sycamore Grange to alternative suitable accommodation in advance of the demolition and redevelopment project (subject to Cabinet approval in December 2022).

There are currently 25 tenanted properties and 15 void properties in Sycamore Grange (November 2022).

It is expected, given the age of the client group and their current independent living accommodation, that the majority of tenants will require some level of independent living or supported housing in the process. Kirklees Council has 19 Retirement Living Schemes and 3 Extra Care facilities.

It is anticipated that rehousing the remaining tenants from Sycamore Grange could take up to 12 months to complete. However, this is dependent on available stock of a particular type to ensure that adequate housing that meets the needs of each individual can be found, and that we are sympathetic and supportive of all individual needs, support networks, health and wellbeing support and accessing care requirements. The availability of stock and individual needs will determine the final timeframe.

Homes and Neighbourhoods' staff resources required to support the rehousing programme:

- Service Manager (support) x 1
- Housing Management Officers x 2
- Independent Living Manager x 1
- Independent Living Officers x 2
- Accessible Homes Officer – as required (no discussion held with this team at this stage)
- Estate Caretaking Support – as required
- Communication Officer – x 1
- Tenant Involvement Officer x 1

Decanting Process

Housing Management Officers in Homes and Neighbourhoods' Older People's Support Service, supported by the Independent Living Manager and Independent Living Officers will complete the initial assessment meeting with each individual tenant. Where required an officer from the council's Accessible Homes Team will provide a medical assessment of housing needs.

Officers will:

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- Carry out a home visit to all tenants at the scheme to assess their individual housing needs through a thorough assessment process
- Accessible Homes Officers will support Housing Management Teams in assessments of need where there are notable health and wellbeing concerns that require consideration when rehousing is being sought
- Confirm and explain the rehousing process, including support for all tenants to register an application for rehousing, find out about suitable rehousing options, place bids and view any suitable accommodation
- Offer the opportunity to meet with other contacts linked to the tenant, such as family or friends, and health professionals providing support to ensure that the tenant has the full range of support in place to transition to a new home
- Discuss any specific needs that the tenant might have, ensuring the necessary health assessments are made regarding future housing need
- Maintain regular contact with each tenant, providing updates and support throughout the process
- Ensure all tenants can access information including communication about the programme of work and rehousing options
- Plan with support from other services, the transition of care and support from a tenant's current home to their new home.
- Clearly define the options for returning to any new development on completion

Practical Support

When suitable housing has been identified, Homes and Neighbourhoods Housing Officers, alongside procured contractors for removals, will support the tenant with:

- Packing, and removal including all costs for packing materials, packing up belongings and unpacking belongings and furniture as part of the move
- Termination of tenancy and any associated documentation required
- Completing a Choose'n'Move application to access the agreed band award relevant to their individual circumstances
- Support and advise alongside colleagues in Accessible Homes if other alternative accommodation is available /suitable for their needs (i.e.: private sector, Extra Care)
- Consult with the Empty Homes Team to manage shortlisting and offers
- Support tenants with accompanied viewing and arrange for appropriate paperwork to be signed
- Manage and arrange the practical removals, including disconnection and reconnection of appliances
- Discuss and agree appropriate support with any furniture and floor coverings for a council property
- Offer advice and support with benefit claims
- Discuss and administer the home loss payment, including arranging appropriate payments to be made in line with any arrangements in place with family, Client Financial Affairs and through any lasting power of attorney arrangements
- Continue to support any future applications to move back to the area on completion of redevelopment

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Housing Offer

The suitability of an alternative property will be determined through consultation with the tenant and will, as far as is reasonable, take the personal circumstances of the tenant into account including proximity to family, medical practitioners, care and support networks and the need to retain independence. Housing suitability will be assessed considering:

- Household size
- Bedroom entitlement now and in the future should any change in entitlement be required due to health and wellbeing
- Aids and adaptations currently and in the future
- Location of carers, support networks and facilities to aid independence or retain community support
- The long-term health of the individual and any conditions which are likely to change their housing need in the near future will be reviewed

Alternative accommodation if provided by the council will meet the current Lettable Standard for all void properties and will therefore be decorated throughout (no decoration allowance will be required). Carpets, flooring and blinds will also be provided should the tenant be rehoused into another council property, based on individual needs. For any tenant rehoused in non-council accommodation, any further support will be considered based on the individual circumstances.

Where a tenant or a member of their household are disabled and require a suitably adapted property, then this will be determined through the initial rehousing assessment process and alongside the council's Accessible Homes Team to identify an appropriate property in such cases.

The accommodation offer will be based on the current and future need of the tenant including adaptations and care needs, and not necessarily a like for like comparison with the tenant's main home.

Tenants may choose to take accommodation provided by another social housing landlord or in the private sector. In these circumstances, support with packing, removals and relocation will still be provided.

Temporary and Permanent Housing Advice

Given the client group and the period required to redevelop the area, the rehousing offer will be treated as permanent ensuring tenants can access the statutory home loss payment (£7,800 from 1st October 2022)

On completion of the new development approval will be sought for a Local Lettings Plan which will give priority to tenants who previously lived in the property to return to the new development, should they wish to apply.

Allocations Process and Band Award

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On completion of the housing need assessment process each tenant will be awarded Band B – Decant. Where appropriate the Accessible Homes Team will award medical banding in line with individual needs which will prioritise tenants into those with medical needs and those who can access general needs accommodation. Tenants who need enhanced care and support will be supported by officers in the Accessible Homes Team to register, apply and access suitable accommodation in the wider portfolio in Kirklees offering care and support (Extra Care, Supported Housing etc.)

Availability of Stock

There are currently 7 properties available in a nearby independent living scheme at Lynroyd. This is not sufficient to offer this option to all the tenants from Sycamore Grange, and likewise this accommodation may not be suitable for all tenants. To ensure that tenants leaving Sycamore Grange are given priority for rehousing (above other Band B and Band B medical applicants), a local lettings plan will be considered for all allocations to Independent Living properties during the project. This will ensure that anyone living in Sycamore Grange will have the first opportunity to access alternative independent living accommodation as this becomes available. Subject to Cabinet approval in December and the formal engagement (which may identify other considerations), the specific details of these arrangements will be finalised in consultation with the Accessible Homes Team, Aids & Adaptations, Housing Solutions, Adult Social Care, and other support services as required.

Financial Support for Tenants

This section details the financial support available to tenants moving permanently to a new home.

Home loss payments - These payments are made only when a tenant has to move permanently to alternative accommodation because of essential works or demolition and is likely to apply at Sycamore Grange given the length of time it will take to redevelopment the site. The current payment is £7,800 (from 1st October 2022).

Furniture removals - Furniture removals will be arranged and paid for by Homes and Neighbourhoods. Where a tenant requires assistance with packing and other removal arrangements due to age, ability or health conditions this will be provided. This will be assessed during the home visit and consultation period

Furniture package - This will be assessed and the outcome will be based on individual circumstances.

Costs associated with the supply of essential services - The cost of relocating and maintaining essential services such as connecting cookers, television aerials, utilities and phone lines is covered in the Home Loss payment.

Cost of relocation of medical or other support equipment

This will be provided by Homes and Neighbourhoods, in conjunction with support from Adult Social Care

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Cost Estimate – (£ per property)

Home Loss	£7,800
Removal costs including support and packing equipment	Approx. £450 (without packing support) Approx. £800 (including packing support for removal and relocation)
Floor covering	Approx. £800
Blinds	Approx. £450
Furniture package	Optional depending on circumstances Cost ranges from £103 (for single item) to £1,687 (for multiple items)
Disconnection and reconnection of appliances	Included in Home Loss payment
Redirection of Mail	Included in home Loss payment)
Costs associated with the supply of essential services	Approx. £300 to remove any care and support IT or Assistive Technology
Adaptations costs	Further consideration will be given to absorbing the costs of providing <i>like for like</i> adaptations in any new property. Where <i>additional</i> adaptations are identified these may be chargeable to the tenant dependent on circumstances.
Total estimated cost per property	Circa. £9,000 to £12,000 dependent on adaptation requirements and support needs

Where a tenant owes money in the form of rent or other debt under normal circumstances any payment due to them may be offset in part or full against those debts in line with policies relating to the repayment of debt. The types of debt that are relevant to this part of the policy include the following examples:

- rent arrears (including any relevant service charge)
- former-tenancy arrears (including any relevant service charge)
- rechargeable repair debts
- court costs