

Alton Area Masterplan

Council Tenant rehousing
information booklet

June 2016



Introduction

Over the last four years the council has been developing a regeneration project for the Alton area in consultation with the local community. The Final Masterplan was approved by Wandsworth's executive in October 2014 and can be viewed online at www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehampton or at Roehampton Library.

This booklet provides an update on the rehousing package which would be offered to council tenants who need to move if the redevelopment goes ahead. It explains the options you would have, the compensation arrangements and the support available to help you through the process.

The regeneration plans may be adapted and developed as they are delivered, not least to respond to changing resident demands. However our commitments to local rehousing and the terms set out here will continue. If you have any immediate questions about the contents of this booklet then please contact the regeneration project team, their contact details are on back page of this booklet.

What kind of council tenancy do you have?

A secure tenancy

If your tenancy started before April 2012 you will have a secure tenancy. You may also have been granted a secure tenancy after this date in certain circumstances.

A flexible fixed-term tenancy

If your tenancy started after April 2012 you will have a flexible fixed-term tenancy.

1 Next steps

At a later stage in the development process every council tenant living in a directly affected property will be contacted to arrange an initial interview. The interview will enable us to understand your individual circumstances and to explain the rehousing options open to you in more detail.

You will not be expected to make any choices straight away and will be given the time and support you need to consider your options fully. See Section 3: Supporting you through the process for more detail.

If the council cannot proceed with the project you will be contacted and the contents of this booklet would no longer apply.

1.1 When would I have to move?

The earliest any tenant would have to move to their new home in the local area would be the end of 2017.

The council will be able to provide a more accurate timescale for individual households once a detailed development phasing plan is produced setting out the order in which each part of the estate will be rebuilt. An initial phasing plan will be published, at which time all tenants would be contacted by the council.

2 Rehousing commitments

In June 2013 the council published a number of commitments to council tenants, these were:

- You will be offered an alternative home on a social rent within the new development or within the local area.
- The new home will have no less security of tenure than you have now and you will retain your Right to Buy.
- The size of the new home will be based on your assessed housing need (the size of your household).
- If you are under-occupying you will be offered an incentive to downsize to a property that meets your assessed need or the choice of a new home one bedroom over what you are assessed to need.
- The development will be phased to minimise the use of temporary housing.
- The new properties will meet the Mayor of London's quality and size standards.
- There will be opportunities for tenants to purchase a new low cost homeownership property within the new development or elsewhere in the borough with help from the council.
- If your tenancy is over one year old you will be entitled to compensation of £5,300 per household and reasonable moving and decorating costs.

This booklet provides more detail on these commitments as well as responding to the questions and suggestions raised during the previous consultations.

3 Supporting you through the process

If the regeneration project goes ahead every council tenant will be given an initial interview to enable the council to understand your individual circumstances and to explain the rehousing options open to you in more detail.

We realise how important your home is to you and your wellbeing. We also understand the prospect of moving home may be stressful and disturbing. The council is fully committed to reaching agreement with residents over their move to a suitable new home which fully meets their needs. This booklet explains this commitment in more detail and sets out the steps we will take to make this possible.

Should the regeneration project proceed, it can only go ahead when all the homes in an affected block are empty so that regeneration and redevelopment can begin. This is the only way to complete the scheme and deliver the many local benefits including new homes for tenants.

You will not be expected to make any choices straight away and will have a minimum of six months to consider your options and get the support you need to make the best choice for your household. The following support and advice will be available to help you reach a fully informed decision:

You will have a designated rehousing and advice officer

You will be allocated a dedicated rehousing and advice officer to help you through the process. They will talk to you regarding your housing requirements and your preferences for your future home, as well as providing assistance to ensure that you are as prepared as possible when it is time for you to move to your new home.

Rehousing information packs

Detailed information packs will be provided containing useful information to assist you. This will include lists of local contractors and removal firms as well as "how to" lists for getting appliances re-connected and accounts moved.

Extra help for vulnerable and elderly tenants

Extra assistance, where it is required, could include organising and managing your move for you and checking on you after you've moved in. Your rehousing and advice officer would discuss these options with you long before your move takes place.

Plenty of notice

Residents will know which phase of development they are due to move in at least one year in advance and will be given a precise moving date at least three months in advance.

Early moves

In some circumstances it may be possible for tenants to move ahead of their scheduled phase. You will be able to discuss your preferences and needs with your rehousing and advice officer.

Moving outside the regeneration area

If residents wish to move outside of the regeneration area we will try to find another council home that meets your needs in another part of Wandsworth. If residents want to move outside of Wandsworth, or even outside of London, we will also try to assist in finding you a suitable tenancy.

Asking for a move outside of the regeneration area will not affect your offer of a new home in the local area. A new local home would be reserved for you until you secured an alternative. If you are interested in this possibility you should discuss it with your dedicated rehousing and advice officer.

Minimising temporary moves

The council will do everything it can to ensure tenants only move once, from their existing home direct into their new permanent home. To do this the redevelopment of the estate will be phased, with sufficient new homes built before existing homes need to be vacated.

4 New development homes

- Your new home will meet the Mayor of London's quality and size standards.
- Your new home will be provided with carpets or other flooring (including underlay or sound proofing), blinds or curtains.
- Your new home would have the option to have an oven/hob, fridge freezer and washing machine/dryer fitted.
- We will work with residents where it is possible to inform aspects of internal layout of the new homes (e.g. where adaptations are required, where there is the opportunity to either provide an open plan living area or to provide a separate kitchen area)
- If you consider adaptations will be required to your new home then the council will carry out an occupational needs assessment. Any adaptations required would be made prior to you moving in.
- You will be able to express a preference of floor levels however properties will be prioritised on a need basis with ground floor properties most likely to be allocated to those with limited mobility or other relevant health conditions.

Example homes would be built at appropriate stages of the project and you will be able to view your new home on plan and in a model. Approaching the time of completion you will be able to visit your new home.

5 Tenancy

The new development will provide a new home; on a social rent for all current council tenants

It is the council's clear intention to continue charging social rents which continue to be set below market or equivalent Affordable Rent levels. However, the new housing will not be available for some years and it is not possible to provide an indication of rent levels at this stage.

There will be no change in your tenancy conditions

Tenancy conditions for the new properties will be the same as for your existing tenancy and in line with current council policy.

You will retain the right to buy your home

Presently as a council tenant, you can buy your current home under the Right to Buy scheme. However, if the Alton area redevelopment goes ahead at some point the Right to Buy will need to be suspended in relation to your current home. This Right to Buy will be reinstated once you move into your new home.

Flexible fixed-term tenancy

Reviews of your flexible fixed-term tenancy, applying the councils tenancy policy, will continue to take place as scheduled up to the time when the property is required for redevelopment.

There are circumstances where people will not qualify for a new home in the redevelopment:

- You are not a lawful occupant of the property (named tenant is not occupying the property as only and principal home).
- If you are a subtenant of a council leaseholder you will not be offered a new property in the scheme.
- You have had a notice of seeking possession served against you for breach of tenancy conditions including antisocial behaviour and rent arrears and you have failed to comply with agreed terms of the court order.

6 Allocation of properties

The new properties will be allocated in accordance with your housing need at the time of the move.

A full housing needs assessment will be carried out close to your time of move. The number of bedrooms in your new property will be determined by the size and composition of your household.

6.1 One bedroom homes

There will be no studio accommodation built in the new scheme. Single person households, lone pregnant women and couples will be allocated a self-contained one bedroom property.

6.2 Additional bedrooms

You will be allowed an additional bedroom for each:

- additional couple.
- unpartnered adult aged 21 years or older
- pair of adolescents aged 10-20 of the same sex
- pair of children under the age of 10 regardless of sex
- where none of the above applies a person ages 10-20 years will be paired with a child under the age of 10 years of the same sex.
- remaining unpaired person

The criteria above will be considered having regard to medical and other professional reports. Each case will be judged on its own merit.

6.3 Under-occupying households

If you are currently under-occupying your property then the council has committed to providing a new home the size of which meets your assessed need or one room above your assessed need.

7 Compensation and disturbance

All council tenants who have lived in their home for more than a year will be entitled to a statutory home loss payment of £4,700 to compensate them for the move. This amount is fixed by central government and is reviewed annually.

Any rent arrears would be deducted from the compensation element of any payment from the council.

7.1 Disturbance payment

You will also be in line to receive a disturbance payment which will cover your reasonable costs of moving, these could include, although are not limited to:

- Removal costs
- Disconnection and reconnection of services
- Disconnection and reconnection of appliances, including movable fixtures and fittings, e.g. light fittings.
- New window dressings up to a value to be determined.
- Redirected mail (time limited)
- Incidental administrative costs incurred by change of home - change of driving licence address etc.
- Other reasonable expenses considered by rehousing and advice officer.

7.2 Other compensations

If pre-approved improvement works have been undertaken in your home you may be eligible for compensation in line with the council's existing policy.

Find out more

If you have any questions about the Final Masterplan, the secure tenants information booklet or the Regeneration process in general then please get in touch with the Regeneration team using the contact details below.

Online

Our webpages include a copy of this booklet, the Final Masterplan, Executive Summary and more information on the Regeneration process
Visit: **www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehampton**

E-newsletter

To receive updates on the Regeneration project by email sign up for the e-newsletter at
www.wandsworth.gov.uk/roehampton

Contact us

You can contact the Regeneration team who can help answer your questions and explain how you can get involved.

Gary Cox - Roehampton Regeneration Project Manager

Janine Newton - Roehampton Regeneration Principal Project Officer

Email: **roehampton@wandsworth.gov.uk**

Call : **(020) 8871 6207**



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