

The Future of Avondale Drive Estate

A Guide For Secure Council Tenants



Looking to the future for Avondale Drive Estate

Hillingdon Council wants to ensure that Avondale Drive Estate is a good place to live for existing residents and future generations.

Following initial consultation with residents over the summer of 2020 the majority of residents wanted the council to explore a redevelopment option and the council is therefore developing designs for a new estate, in consultation with residents.

When finalised residents will be able to vote on whether they want the proposals for redevelopment to go ahead. If you are a council tenant named on the tenancy agreement you will get a vote.

No decision will be made to go ahead with the redevelopment proposals until the result of the ballot is known.



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DESIGNED,
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**SECURE,
SAFE AND
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HOMES**

**MONEY TO
COVER THE COST
OF MOVING INTO
YOUR NEW HOME**

**GOOD SIZED
ROOMS AND
BUILT-IN
STORAGE**

What this might mean for council secure tenants if there is a yes vote

If residents vote yes, and the council approves the redevelopment proposal, council tenants will need to move home, over time, to allow the development to take place.

The council understands that this can be an unsettling time but wants to reassure you that it will provide timely information, including plenty of notice of any key dates that need to be planned for.

When the time comes to move the council will make sure you have suitable alternative accommodation that fits your housing needs and will act fairly and in line with good practice at all times.

Importantly you will have the 'right to return' meaning that you can move into one of the new homes on the rebuilt estate if you wish.

Summary of the council's offer

Council secure tenants, including probationary tenants and those with fixed term tenancies, will be offered:

- The 'right to return' to a new home on the new estate at social rent
- A £6,500 home loss payment when you move
- The choice to move to other council or housing association properties in the borough instead if you wish, subject to availability
- Removals, and other reasonable moving expenses, paid for
- Extra support with moving if you need it, such as packing
- A home that is the right size and specification for your needs, including meeting the needs of people with disabilities and care requirements
- Choice of kitchen fittings, bathroom fittings and flooring in one of our new homes, plus wall paint colour where possible
- A safe and secure home, meeting all current building regulations
- A well-insulated new home that is energy efficient and easy to heat

Choosing your new home

The redevelopment will take place in phases. If you are in phase one you will be able to choose from either:

- a) Your choice of permanent council or housing association property off the estate or
- b) A temporary move off the estate while we build a new home for you on the estate

Any secure council tenant household that is required to move temporarily will have a guaranteed right to return. We will make sure that temporary moves affect as few households as possible and minimise the length of any short-term stay.

If you are in a later phase, in most cases you will not need to move temporarily. However, as it comes close to your move date you will be able to choose from either:

- a) Your choice of permanent council or housing association property off the estate or
- b) A permanent move to a new council home that we build for you on the new estate

If there are sufficient properties in a new build phase, we will be able to offer you a choice of properties on the estate.

We will facilitate off-site moves by giving you priority banding on the council's Choice Based Letting system 6 months before your move. You will be able to bid for properties that you are interested in across the borough and, if you need us to, council officers will help you to use the system.

Tenants will be supported with their move whether they are moving to a new home being built on the new development or moving away from the regeneration area.

Understanding your re-housing requirements

Once a decision has been made to proceed with the redevelopment a dedicated decant officer will meet with you (virtually or in person) and carry out a full housing needs assessment of your household's individual requirements.

This will be on a different date depending on which phase of the development you are in. If you are in phase one this meeting will take place between June and December 2021.

We will use this meeting:

- To advise tenants on options for rehousing
- To verify the households' details to assess your housing need
- To review housing and special medical requirements for new homes
- To provide information about the redevelopment programme financial and legal processes
- To understand and record your preferences for rehousing

The information gathered will inform size, floor level and mobility need for each household and level and types of support needed.

In allocating properties on the new estate, the council will take residents' preferences into account where possible, such as allocations on lower floors or close to existing neighbours. However, the council is not able to guarantee meeting all individual household preferences.

Through the lifetime of a redevelopment scheme residents' housing requirements may change and so we may refresh this verification at key stages.



**YOUR OWN
TERRACE OR
BALCONY**

**OUTDOOR
SPACES TO
RELAX IN AND
ENJOY**

Compensation and help with moving

Compensation

Secure Council tenants who have lived in their home for more than 12 months will be entitled to a statutory home loss payment of **£6,500** per household. This figure is set by the government and reviewed every year.

This is payable whether you move to one of the new properties on the estate or choose to move off the estate.

If you are in arrears when you move to the new property, the council is able to deduct the arrears from your compensation.

Help with moving

In addition to the compensation, the council will cover the reasonable costs of moving.

This can include:

- Disconnection and reconnection of white goods
- Telephone/Sky reconnection
- Redirection of mail
- Removal costs

To make moving day run more smoothly you will have a dedicated decant officer assigned to you and the council will organise removals for you using a reputable company registered with the British Association of Removers. You will be given plenty of notice of your move day and packing boxes will be delivered well in advance so that you have time to prepare.

Vulnerable residents that need additional support will receive further help with the practical arrangements for moving including a packing service.

Additionally, in most cases we will be able to organise a viewing of your allocated new build property in advance so that you can measure up etc.

HOMES TO MEET YOUR NEEDS



Housing that fits your needs

The council will make sure that you are allocated a home that fits your housing need. Your housing need is assessed in line with the council's Social Housing Allocation Policy.

Overcrowded households

Households that are **overcrowded** will be rehoused in a larger home that fits their housing need, in accordance with our policy.

Under-occupiers

Those secure council tenants currently living in a property with more rooms than their housing need are '**under-occupying**'. If this applies to your household, you will have a choice.

The first option is to be allocated to a home that fits your housing need exactly and be offered further compensation, on top of the £6,500 home loss payment, of an additional £1500 - £2500, depending on how large your current property is.

Alternatively, if you are currently under-occupying you will be able to keep **one extra bedroom** above your housing need when you move if that is your preference. This would be offered as an alternative to, not in addition to a downsizing incentive payment.

So, for instance if you are a single person or couple currently living in a two bedroomed flat you would ordinarily be offered a one bedroomed flat, but because you are already under-occupying you will be able to move into a two bedroomed flat if you wish.

Tenants needing adaptations

In assessing housing needs the council will also take into account a tenant's requirements in terms of any **adaptations needed**, for instance where there are mobility issues and adaptations are recommended by the occupational therapist.

In exceptional cases where your housing need cannot be accommodated on site this will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Age restricted housing, including bungalows

Hillingdon have several properties away from the estate that are designated for older residents. If you are over 60 you may be eligible for one of our **bungalows**, subject to availability, and if you are over 55 you may be eligible for one of the specialist flats.

These homes are advertised through the Choice Based Lettings system. As set out above, tenants from the estate will have **priority banding** on the system and, **if you choose this option**, we will help you to bid for these properties in the normal way, as long as you meet the age criteria specified in the advert.

'Split' households

In some instances, the council may consider providing **two separate homes** for households that are willing to split in return for trading down in property size.

For example, a household due to be moved with an adult child may consider applying for a split into separate households to be allocated 2 x 1 bedroomed flats.

This will be considered on a case-by-case basis where it may benefit the redevelopment by freeing up a family sized home. An introductory tenancy is applicable for the new tenant if this takes place and home loss and disturbance payments would be paid to the existing main secure council tenant only.

Personalising your new home

Once the allocation process is complete, tenants will be invited to take part in the resident choice process, with an opportunity to personalise their new home on the estate by making choices including the colour of floor covering and kitchen options.

Rents

Existing secure council tenants on Avondale Drive Estate who move to one of the new council properties on site will be charged the formula social rent appropriate to that new home.

Tenants choosing to move off the estate will pay the rent as set out on the Choice Based Letting system for that particular property.

The Ballot

Hillingdon Council will undertake a ballot of residents in the spring which will be run in line with the Greater London Authority (GLA) requirements for resident ballots. The design proposals and re-housing offer will be set out in a written Landlord Offer and eligible residents will vote yes or no to the proposals. Once the Landlord Offer is issued you will have 5 weeks to consider it before you have to cast your vote.

The following residents will be eligible to vote if they live in a block that is part of the planned redevelopment programme:

- An existing secure or assured tenant named on the tenancy agreement,
- A resident on the estate who has been on the housing register for at least 12 months prior to the vote
- A resident homeowner, named on the lease, who has been resident on the estate for at least 12 months before the vote

In line with GLA requirements the ballot is being run entirely independently from the council by Civica (formerly Electoral Reform Services). They will issue and collect the ballot papers and confirm the result. You will be able to vote by post, phone or online.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisor

All residents have access to an 'Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisor' who have experience of the issues that arise for both tenants and leaseholders in this situation and can give independent advice.

They can be contacted on:

0800 317 066

info@ppcr.org.uk

Contacting us

If you would like further information please contact the team on:

0800 994 9323

consultation@iceniprojects.com