

Regenerating North Solihull

Important: this charter sets out your rights

RESIDENTS' CHARTER

Our promises to you when your home is affected by regeneration plans



September 2008

Our promises to you

We will consult local people on all aspects of the regeneration programme, through consultation activities designed to make sure local people get involved.

Our principles:

- Everyone has a right to be consulted and have a say in the regeneration programme.
- We will make sure that there are opportunities for people to take part in consultation and will work to reflect the diverse needs of the community. This includes being consulted as an 'individual' and as a part of a wider community/neighbourhood.
- We will be clear about the purpose of consultation.
- We will talk to existing groups and community networks to encourage everyone to take part.
- Consultation is a two-way process.
- Results of consultation will be shared with local people.
- Sometimes a decision may be made that does not fully reflect the results of consultation. If this happens, a full explanation of the thinking behind the decision will be provided.
- All key public consultation events will have crèche facilities to enable families with children to attend and will be held at times generally convenient to residents.

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Commercial Properties

Different arrangements will apply for commercial property.

If you rent commercial premises from Solihull Council, please call Andrew Evans on 0121 704 8270.

If you privately rent or own commercial property, please call Andrew Temple Cox on 0161 200 5304.



If you rent your home from the Council

Choices:

1. Transfer to another Council home
2. Transfer to a rented Housing Association home
3. Buy a new home with help and advice from us

After we have all worked together to produce a final plan, and it has been approved by Councillors, we will send you a 'phasing plan' that tells you when work will start in different parts of your neighbourhood.

A representative from our Homemaker Team will visit you to discuss the options available at the time set out in the Phasing Plan.

Whatever you decide to do, we will:

- Pay you £4700 in compensation*
- Help you with the costs of moving home**

* This compensation (called the "Statutory Homeless Payment") will be paid as long as you have lived in your home for at least twelve months and have a valid tenancy. If you owe rent, or other debts to the Council, we will deduct these from the payment. You will receive this payment once you have surrendered keys to your property and it is empty.

**This allowance (called the "Discretionary Disturbance Allowance") covers certain, specific costs that you might incur as a result of the move and will be, on average, around £1,000. You will receive this payment when you have accepted an offer of rehousing and all the paperwork is complete.

1. Transfer to another Council home

You will be offered another Council home that meets the needs of your household and we will make every effort to take your wishes into consideration when finding you an alternative home.

We can provide extra help with packing or removal arrangements if you need it – the costs associated with this are covered in the "Disturbance Allowance". **

2. Transfer to a Housing Association Home

Housing Associations are independent not-for-profit organisations providing affordable housing for people in housing need. They often have long waiting lists, but can provide more choice of housing and different types of housing to Council-owned properties.

We can help you apply for a Housing Association tenancy, either in an existing Housing Association property or in a new property being built as part of the regeneration. If you would like to move into a newly built property, you would probably need to move more than once. We would meet both lots of moving costs (Disturbance Allowance)** but you would not get two lots of compensation (Homeloss Payment).*

The size of the home you are offered by a Housing Association is based on your family size. So if, for example, you currently live in a Council house but your children have left home, you might be offered a modern apartment rather than a house. We can discuss this with you in more detail, although a final decision would be made by the Housing Association concerned.

As a Housing Association tenant you would have a right to acquire, similar to a Council tenant's right to buy their property.

3. Buying a home

We want to help people buy their own homes and we will give you lots of help and advice if you would like to do this.

One of the ways to help you onto the property ladder is through a "Shared Ownership" scheme. This means that you buy a share in the property, for example 50%, and rent the other 50% share from the property developer or a Housing Association. Over time, you can increase your share and eventually you will own the home outright. The rent for the other share will be reasonable and you do not have to actually 'share' the home with anyone else!

When we visit you, we will discuss these options with you. There will be lots of other information and advice, and there may be other schemes available. You can, of course, choose to buy a new or existing home outright without our assistance.





If you rent your home from a Housing Association

Choices:

1. Move to another home with your current Housing Association
2. Move to a Council home or one with a different Housing Association
3. Buy a new home with help and advice from us

After we have all worked together to produce a final plan, and it has been approved by Councillors, we will send you a 'phasing plan' that tells you when work will start in different parts of your neighbourhood.

A representative from our Homemaker Team will visit you to discuss the options available at the time set out in the Phasing Plan.

Whatever you decide to do, we will:

- Pay you £4700 in compensation*
- Help you with the costs of moving home**

* This compensation (called the "Statutory Homelessness Payment") will be paid as long as you have lived in your home for at least twelve months and have a valid tenancy. If you owe rent, or other debts to the Council, we will deduct these from the payment. You will receive this payment once you have surrendered keys to your property and it is empty.

**This allowance (called the "Discretionary Disturbance Allowance") covers certain, specific costs that you might incur as a result of the move and will be, on average, around £1,000. You will receive this payment when you have accepted an offer of rehousing and all the paperwork is complete.

1. Move to another home with your current Housing Association

If you would like to rent another home with your current Housing Association, then we will work with them to try and find you a suitable home. If a suitable home is not immediately available, we can find you alternative accommodation whilst you are on the waiting list.

Otherwise, you may wish to apply for alternative housing with the Council, or a different Housing Association.

2. Move to a Council home or one with a different Housing Association

We can help to find you a suitable Council home in the Borough. These homes sometimes have a shorter waiting list and this could be an alternative to waiting for a Housing Association home to become available.

Alternatively, we can help you apply to different Housing Associations, either in an existing Housing Association property or in a new property being built as part of the regeneration. If you would like to move into a newly built property, you would probably need to move more than once. We would meet both lots of moving costs (Disturbance Allowance)** but you would not get two lots of compensation (Homeloss Payment)*.

3. Buying a home

We want to help people buy their own homes and we will give you lots of help and advice if you would like to do this.

One of the ways to help you onto the property ladder is through a "Shared Ownership" scheme. This means that you buy a share in the property, for example 50%, and rent the other 50% share from the property developer or a Housing Association. Over time, you can increase your share and eventually you will own the home outright. The amount of rent you pay for the other share is reasonable and you do not have to actually 'share' the home with anyone else!

When we visit you, we will discuss these options with you. There will be lots of other information and advice, and there may be other schemes available. You can, of course, choose to buy a new or existing home outright without our assistance.





If you rent your home privately

Choices:

1. Rent another home privately
2. Buy a house with our help and advice
3. Other options if your circumstances have changed

After we have all worked together to produce a final plan, and it has been approved by Councillors, we will send you a 'phasing plan' that tells you when work will start in different parts of your neighbourhood.

A representative from our Homemaker Team will visit you to discuss the options available at the time set out in the Phasing Plan.

Whatever you decide to do, we will:

- Pay you £4700 in compensation*
- Help you with the costs of moving home**

1. Rent another home privately

We will negotiate separately with the property owner. As the tenant living in the property, you will be eligible for the compensation and assistance outlined above – as long as you have a formal tenancy agreement.

Instead of renting another home, you may wish to take advantage of the help that will be available to get you on the property ladder.

* This compensation (called the "Statutory Homeless Payment") will be paid as long as you have lived in your home for at least twelve months and have a valid tenancy. If you owe debts to the Council, we will deduct these from the payment. You will receive this payment once you have surrendered keys to your property and it is empty.

**This allowance (called the "Discretionary Disturbance Allowance") covers certain, specific costs that you might incur as a result of the move and will be, on average, around £1,000. You will receive this payment when you have accepted an offer of rehousing and all the paperwork is complete.

2. Buying a home

We want to help people buy their own homes and we will give you lots of help and advice if you would like to do this.

One of the ways to help you onto the property ladder is through a "Shared Ownership" scheme. This means that you buy a share in the property, for example 50%, and rent the 50% half share from the property developer or a Housing Association. Over time, you can increase your share and eventually you will own the home outright. The amount of rent you pay for the other share is reasonable and you do not have to actually 'share' the home with anyone else!

When we visit you, we will discuss these options with you. There will be lots of other information and advice, and there may be other schemes available. You can, of course, choose to buy a new or existing home outright without our assistance.

3. If your circumstances have changed

You might be eligible for a Council home or to rent a home from a Housing Association. There are waiting lists for these types of homes and not everyone will be eligible.

If you are eligible, we can help to find you a suitable Council home in the Borough. These homes usually have shorter waiting lists to Housing Association homes, but you might have less choice about the type of house.

Alternatively, we can help you apply to Housing Associations, either in an existing Housing Association property or in a new property being built as part of the regeneration. If you would like to move into a newly built property, you would probably need to move more than once. We would meet both lots of moving costs (Disturbance Allowance)** but you would not get two lots of compensation (Homeless Payment)*.

You can discuss this option in more detail when our representative meets you.





If you own your own home

Choices:

1. Buy another home with help and advice from us
2. Other options if you do not want to buy another home
3. If you own your own home but do not live in it

After we have all worked together to produce a final plan, and it has been approved by Councillors, we will send you a 'phasing plan' that tells you when work will start in different parts of your neighbourhood.

A representative from our Homemaker Team will visit you to discuss the options available at the time set out in the Phasing Plan.

Whatever you decide to do, we will:

- Buy your property from you at its independently-judged market value
- Pay you an extra 10% of your property's market value as compensation*
- Help you with the costs of moving home**
- Give you advice about what else is happening in the regeneration area to help you make a decision on what to do

* This compensation £4700 - £47,000 (called the "Statutory Homeless Payment") will be paid as long as you have lived in your home for at least twelve months. If you own debts to the Council, we will deduct these from the payment. You will receive this payment once you have surrendered keys to your property and it is empty.

**This allowance (called the "Discretionary Disturbance Allowance") covers certain, specific costs that you might incur as a result of the move. You will receive this payment when you have agreed with the Homemaker Purchase Team on your housing and all the paperwork is complete.

1. Buy another home

We will give you advice and support in buying another home. When we visit you, we will discuss all the options available. You can of course, choose to buy a new or existing home outright without our assistance.

If you do not live in the home then you will receive the independently judged market value and no further compensation.

2. Other options

You do not have to buy a new home. You might prefer to rent privately, in which case you would still get the same compensation and allowances.

If your circumstances have changed, you might be eligible for a Council home or to rent a home from a Housing Association. There are waiting lists for these types of homes and not everyone will be eligible.

If you are eligible, we can help to find you a suitable Council home in the Borough. These homes usually have shorter waiting lists than Housing Association homes, but you might have less choice about the type of house.

Alternatively, we can help you apply to Housing Associations, either in an existing Housing Association property or in a new property being built as part of the regeneration. If you would like to move into a newly built property, you would probably need to move more than once. We would meet both lots of moving costs (Disturbance Allowance)** but you would not get two lots of compensation (Homeloss Payment).*

You can discuss this option in more detail when our representative meets you.

3. If you own your own home but do not live in it

If you own your own home but do not live in it or have not lived in it for 12 months prior to the Homemaker Team contacting you, then we will buy your property from you at its independently judged market value with no further compensation.





If you are not happy with decisions about your re-housing

You have the right to appeal about decisions on your rehousing. Before you appeal you need to ensure that you have had a decision on the matter that you wish to appeal about. For example, if your housing needs are still being assessed it is not appropriate to appeal until you have been given a decision about your re-housing entitlement.

Contact your Home Maker Officer/Home Purchase Officer to discuss your concerns. Our aim is that by explaining things clearly and giving reasons why we sometimes cannot meet your expectations that the number of appeals will be minimal.

Starting your appeal

If you disagree with our decision you will need to write to us stating why you want to appeal and what you are concerned about. If you need help you may wish to contact Chelmsley Wood Citizens Advice Bureau on 0121 779 6707.

Who will consider my appeal in the first instance?

	Initially	Followed by
Tenants	Head of Operations Estate Management and Housing Options Solihull Community Housing	Director of Housing/ Chief Executive – Solihull Community Housing
Owners	Senior Project Officer – Whitefriars Housing Group	Regeneration Manager – Whitefriars Housing Group

What if I am still unhappy with the decision?

Your case will be considered by the Appeal Panel and you will have the opportunity to attend the hearing and put your case forward. The process is managed by Solihull Council's Democratic Services who will guide you through the process stage by stage. You may contact Joseph Bright direct on 0121 704 6055.

The appeals panel is made up of local Councillors from the Regeneration Scrutiny Board, Solihull Community Housing Board and non executive members of the Regeneration Partnership. There will be three people on the panel.

Issues the panel might consider:

- Reasonableness of the offer of re-housing (for council and housing association tenants)
- The amount and nature of a claim for disturbance payment
- Entitlement to homelessness payment
- Whether it is reasonable for a legal notice of termination to be served
- Whether the sequence and/or time of re-housing is fair and reasonable
- Where a resident wishes to appeal against their rent arrears or any other debt owed to the council at the time of being moved. The appeal body can authorise an amount up to 50% of the homelessness payment figure to be paid over to the resident, even if the resident has a debt outstanding.



If you are not affected by rehousing

Council Tenants

If Solihull Community Housing have not already done so, they will plan to bring your home up to the "Decent Homes Standard" by 2012.

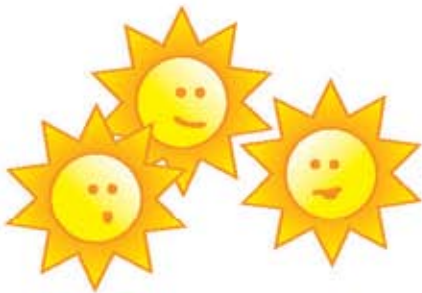
This is a special Government standard and means that your home:

- Will have effective heating and insulation
- Will have a kitchen and bathroom that is in good working order
- Will be warm and watertight

Other types of tenants or homeowners

Because there is so much happening in the regeneration area, we are looking to develop other grants and schemes that might help people to improve their homes, such as Refurbishment Grants.

When these schemes are developed, we will make sure that people who might be eligible find out about the most appropriate schemes.





General information

Regenerating North Solihull is a 15-year project to transform the three wards of Chelmsley Wood, Smith's Wood and Kingshurst & Fordbridge by improving homes, shops, schools, health and community facilities, transport, the environment and creating jobs.

This is one of the UK's biggest ever regeneration programmes;

- **Changing almost 40,000 people's lives for the better**
- **£1.8 billion public and private investment over the next 15 years**
- **8,500 new modern homes**
- **New, state-of-the-art primary schools**
- **Vibrant village centres delivering key services**

Neighbourhood plans are being developed with local people, businesses and public services. These plans will contain details of what will happen, where, and how each plan will be developed in consultation with local people.

Contact us

Call us: 0800 389 7997

Visit us: Monday – Thursday 9am to 5pm
Friday 9am to 4pm

North Solihull Partnership Office
Capitol House
42 Kingshurst Way
B37 6DF

Go online: www.northsolihull.co.uk