

Frequently asked questions (FAQ's) Alice Shepherd House tenants

July 2025



Q: What does having decant status mean?

A: Decant status is awarded to permanent Riverside Housing tenants who need to move due to the upcoming estate regeneration, as agreed by the Tower Hamlets common housing forum after planning has been submitted. The Tower Hamlets Common Housing Register Forum is made up of all the social housing landlords in Tower Hamlets, including the Council. It is this forum who will decide the timing of when the decant status is awarded.

When your application is given decant status, you will receive 1B priority on Tower Hamlets' housing register. This means you will be placed in a higher priority band when bidding for a new home on the council's choice-based lettings system called Homeseekers.

This status applies if you want to find a permanent home away from the regeneration and do not want to wait for a new home to be built.

Q: What if I don't want to move away?

A: If you don't want to move away and want to move to a new home in the regeneration, you will be able to remain in Alice Shepherd House until your new home is ready for you to move onto the Oak House site.

Q: What if I want to return to Alice Shepherd House once I've moved into the new Oak House development?

A: If residents in Alice Shepherd House want to move back to the homes on the site of Alice Shepherd House, they will have to move twice, firstly to a temporary home, before moving back to a new home on the site of Alice Shepherd House but we aim to keep this to an absolute minimum.

Q: Does Alice Shepherd House have decant status now?

A: Not yet, Alice Shepherd House will receive decant status once the new scheme has been granted planning permission.

Q: When will Alice Shepherd House tenants get decant status?

A: Once planning permission has been granted for the development. We are aiming to submit the planning application by summer 2026, with the planning committee reviewing the application a few months later which will decide the outcome when planning has been granted for the development.

Q: What is a homelessness payment and when can I receive it?

A: This is a statutory payment given to social housing tenants who have to move out of their home and will be unable to return, usually because it is due to be demolished or sold. This payment is made after you have moved out and returned the keys to your old home.

The statutory amount is set by the government and is £8,100 at the time of writing this document.

Q: Do I get a homeloss payment if I move from Alice Shepherd House before I have decant status?

A: Yes, at the moment we are willing to make a homeloss payment to you if you move before you have been granted decant status by the council. However, depending on how many people take up the opportunity to move early, we may have to change our position on this as our budget is limited. We will notify residents if this is the case. Any early moves are considered a voluntary transfer rather than a decant, and so we would not offer any additional disturbance payments over the homeloss paid to you.

Q: What banding will I get as a decant?

A: Alice Shepherd tenants will receive 1B status once the scheme has been granted planning permission, which is the second highest banding in the borough.

Q: Why don't I have priority banding now?

A: Because Alice Shepherd House does not have decant status yet. However, if you have medical requirements, or are overcrowded or are under occupying your current home, you can make an application to Tower Hamlets to be placed on the housing list. Tower Hamlets will determine your banding based on your circumstances.

Q: How do I register to bid?

A: Visit the Tower Hamlets Housing website and follow the instructions to create an account if you don't already have one. Fill in the online form with your details, including household size, medical needs and any specific requirements. The Tower Hamlets website will ask you for evidence like proof of identity, proof of address and proof of household members.

The council will assess your application and confirm your priority band. Once approved, you will be able to start bidding. You can then bid for available properties that match your needs through Homesekers.

If you need help with the process, you can contact your Regeneration Officer for support.

Q: Does priority bidding mean we will be accepted as soon as we bid on a property?

A: Not necessarily. While having decant status gives you high priority on the housing register, it does not guarantee that you will get the first property you bid on.

When you bid for a home, several factors are considered, including:

- The number of other bidders also interested in the property.
- How well the property matches your household's needs (e.g. size, medical requirements)
- Availability of suitable homes in the area you prefer.

If you are the highest-priority bidder for a property, you may be offered it, but if there are others with similar priority, the council will allocate homes based on need and suitability. Note some landlords will check to see if you have rent arrears which you will need to clear before moving.

Since housing supply is limited, it may take some time before you successfully secure a home. The Regeneration team will support you throughout this process and provide guidance on finding the best available options.

Q: When am I able to bid on properties?

A: You can bid at any time once your housing application has been approved. However, please be aware that you won't receive priority for bidding before decant status has been awarded to Alice Shepherd House. If you apply to move before then, your application will be assessed under the standard housing criteria set by Tower Hamlets council.

Q: Is there a housing option for adult children living in a decant home who want their own home?

A: The adult child offer is a scheme designed to help adult children (aged 18 or over) living with their family in a decant property to secure their own independent housing. Under this scheme, an eligible adult child may be offered a one-bedroom flat within Tower Hamlets, subject to availability and meeting the council's criteria. Adult children will be given high priority on the waiting list, plus a single offer of housing that they have bid on and have been shortlisted for.

If your adult child accepts their own one-bedroom flat and moves out, your household's housing need will be reassessed. This means when bidding for a new home, your bedroom entitlement will be based on the remaining members of your household.

For example, if you live in a three bedroomed home with two adult children, and both of your children accept their own property and move out, you will then be entitled to a one-bedroom home.

Please be aware we have to follow the housing allocation policy set by Tower Hamlets. If members of a household move separately, it could affect the number of bedrooms you're entitled to. Homes won't be allocated as a like-for-like match in size.

If you want to know more or you're interested in taking up the adult child offer, please reach out to your Regeneration Officer to find out more.

Q: What criteria does an adult child have to meet to be eligible for this offer?

A: This is set by the council and is assessed before you are accepted to the waiting list. To be eligible you will need to demonstrate proof of residency in the home, this is for a minimum of 12 months.

Q: Do adult children receive a homelessness payment?

A: No, they do not receive any compensation or disturbance payments as this is a statutory payment that only applies to permanent tenants.

Q: Why is all of the criteria set by Tower Hamlets Council?

A: Tower Hamlets is operated using a common housing register, which they and the social housing landlords in the borough are signed up to. As part of this agreement we adopt their allocation policy, decant policy and adult child policy and work in line with them. This means that all available homes are shown on Homeseekers and are assessed by Tower Hamlets.

Q: Can I look for properties outside of Tower Hamlets?

A: There are two further options for finding an alternative home in addition to looking on Tower Hamlets Homeseekers website for those already registered. As an Alice Shepherd House resident, although you may not currently have decant status, if you would like a permanent move away you may be interested in the options below.

The first option, is for accessing available homes that One Housing/Riverside have, noting the property may be in one of the London boroughs where we have properties away from Tower Hamlets.

1.Homeconnections

This is our platform for listing available homes from both One Housing Group and Riverside in Tower Hamlets and other London Boroughs.

Application Review: Once you submit your application, it will be reviewed by our Riverside allocations team. Completing an application typically takes about 15 minutes. If you require support, a member of the Regeneration Project Team or Lettings Team will be able to assist you. Make note your application number and login details for future reference. We suggest emailing the details to yourself or to another member of your home. This is very important! Priority will be given once decant status is live, this is dependent on when Alice Shepherd House is due to be demolished. If you are interested in moving prior to having decant status, you can apply to Homeconnections and bid for homes. After approval, you can log in and bid on available homes, similar to the Tower Hamlets system. Properties we advertise on Homeconnections are advertised for between 3-5 days. It is worth checking the website every week for available properties. Only a portion of our homes are listed here due to lettings agreements with local authorities. Note, we don't have Tower Hamlets properties listed as these are all advertised on Homeseekers. Please reach out to your Regeneration Officer to register your interest and to receive a link to apply.

2.Seaside and Country Homes, properties away from London

The second option is with Seaside & Country Homes, this is a scheme that is for registered social housing tenants that are aged 55 or older. Seaside and Country Homes have over 3000 properties (mainly one and two bed bungalows & flats) in the South of England.

If you wish to apply, you need to meet the following **Eligibility criteria**:

- Be at least 55 years of age
- Be a current housing association or council tenant
- Have a household of no more than 3 members
- Joint applications can be made as long as the main applicant is 55 or older and is a current tenant of the property on the application.
- The only household members under 55 that can be added are your partner/spouse, current joint tenant, registered carer or dependant adult child.

Start by visiting their website for guidance and to apply online.

If you have made an application either of the above, please do let your Regeneration Officer know. If you would like assistance in making an application, or for any other queries please contact your Regeneration Officer.

Isaac Amoah

Regeneration Officer

E: isaac.amoah@riverside.org.uk

Arlington, 220 Arlington Road, Camden, London, NW1 7HE
0300 123 9966