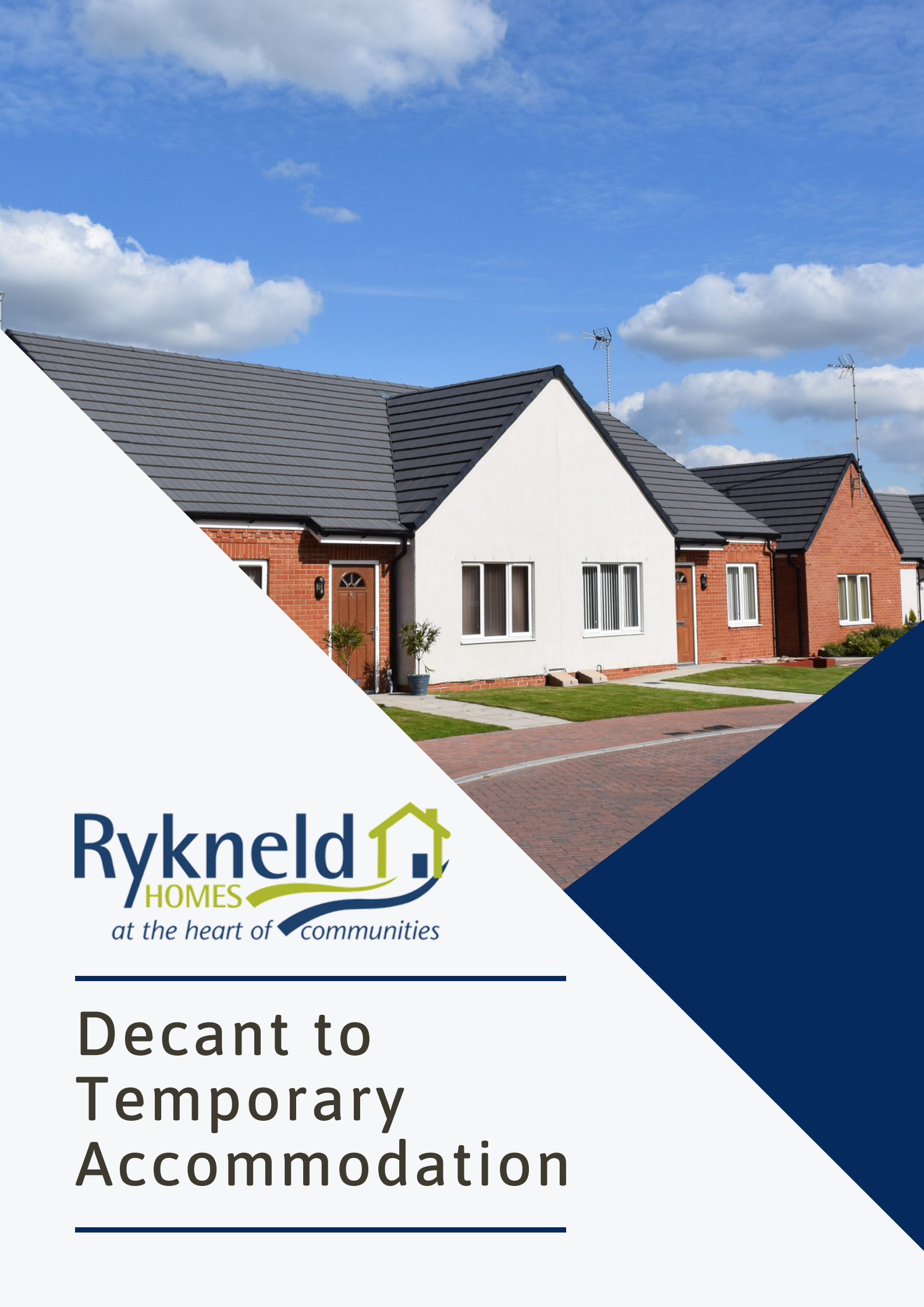




Decant to Temporary Accommodation



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Introduction

Decanting is the process of customers moving to alternative accommodation for a period of time. This is to allow major repairs or refurbishment to take place. Wherever possible, repairs will be carried out whilst the customer is living in their home. Facilities will be provided to minimise any inconvenience caused.

Occasionally, a temporary move may not be suitable and a permanent move will be required; such cases are exceptions. In these cases, the customer's rehousing needs will be managed by the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme.

We will provide a consistent, fair and supportive service. We recognise that temporarily moving to an alternative property for a short period of time may be a stressful experience and involve a substantial upheaval and inconvenience. For this reason we will only consider this where there is no alternative or the nature of the work means that your health and safety could be at risk if you do not leave your home when works are taking place.

We will ensure that you are kept well informed and supported throughout the process, working closely with you to identify and address your needs to offer the right level of support. In all cases you will have an allocated Community Liaison Officer working with you throughout the process.

Rykneld Homes will always follow a fair and consistent approach to decants and ensure that we:

- Make sure that all customers being considered for a decant receive clear and up to date information
- Minimise stress and disruption to customers who require decanting
- Support all customers through the decant process and provide support that meets their needs
- Facilitate the smooth running of all works.

Types of Decant

Decanting may be necessary for a variety of reasons. Most decants are planned but some may be necessary due to emergency situations.

Decant due to planned works

The majority of programmed work and planned repairs work can be carried out with the customer remaining in their home. However, where necessary, a temporary move may be required.

Decant due to emergency situations

In the event of an emergency, i.e. fire or flood or where any applicable legislation or there is a statutory requirement, it may be necessary for the tenant to temporarily move out for a short period of time.

Customers will be encouraged and assisted to make their own arrangements for temporary accommodation with family or friends. If this is not possible, Rykneld Homes will assist the customer to arrange a temporary move to another Council property or an alternative type of accommodation.

Decant Eligibility

Where customers cannot make their own arrangements for temporary accommodation, Rykneld Homes will assist the customer to arrange a temporary move if any of the following apply:

- Essential facilities such as a bathroom, cooking facilities, water, electricity or gas cannot be used for more than 24 hours
- Staying in the property would significantly affect the customer's health or safety
- The circumstances of the case require it including the presence of a significant hazard or where a legislative or statutory obligation necessitates action.

Removal and Storage of Personal Belongings

It is expected that when customers are decanting they will take essential personal belongings with them. Rykneld Homes will provide assistance, where possible and arrange removals. The remaining personal items must be stored in a suitable part of their home so as to allow access to the areas requiring work.

Rykneld Homes may refuse to allow any particular personal item to remain. In this instance Rykneld Homes will provide storage for any personal belongings which must be removed and cannot be accommodated in the customer's temporary home.

An inventory will be prepared and photographs taken to record the condition of all personal belongings left in the customer's home or stored elsewhere. Rykneld Homes will ensure that all contractors carrying out the work to the customer's home have adequate insurance against loss or damage to the customer's personal belongings and to indemnify the Council and Rykneld Homes against any claims made by the customer. A disclaimer will need to be signed by the customer for all personal belongings that we move.



Supporting Vulnerable Customers

Rykneld Homes will ensure that appropriate practical support and services will be available for customers that require decanting. This will be assessed and agreed on a case by case basis.

Rykneld Homes will make all reasonable efforts to obtain appropriate support from social services and other agencies, but Rykneld Homes has overall responsibility for ensuring that decanting is carried out appropriately for such customers.

Safety of Customers

For health and safety reasons, once the customer has moved temporarily, access will not be allowed back into the home until the work is completed. Customers will be informed of this prior to the move and the locks will be changed to prevent unauthorised access.

Your Rights

We will provide services and maintain the decant property (under Occupancy Agreement) consistently with the rights/ obligations set out in the tenancy agreement for your substantive tenancy.

Decant Package

Reasonable costs will be met by Rykneld Homes. The customer will be supported to prepare for the move and carry out packing and unpacking if required. The decant package also covers the following:

- Removals
- Disconnection and reconnection of:
 - Cooker; and
 - Plumbed in washing machine.
- Payment of the cost of:
 - Disconnection and reconnection of telephone/broadband
 - Disconnection and reconnection of TV aerial
 - Redirection of mail for the duration of the decant if required
- Redecoration of repaired areas only to void specification e.g. internal doors
- Storage of carpets and curtain poles/rails/blinds, where necessary
 - Flooring to be fitted in the decant property. Some rooms may not have flooring fitted if it is deemed unnecessary for the duration of the decant
- Transferring minor adaptations eg grab rails
- Assistance to transfer a Care Alarm Service if required
- Transfer of a Key Safe if required
- Removal and reinstatement of curtain poles/rails/blinds where possible
- Removal and reinstatement of light fittings where necessary
- Any expenditure which, in the opinion of Rykneld Homes, has been unavoidably and necessarily incurred because of the need to decant.

Rykneld Homes will, where possible, undertake all the above matters required for the purpose of the decant in order to ensure the move is as easy and stress free as possible; and to ensure value for money.

If you have a TV Licence, Rykneld Homes can assist you to transfer over to the Decant property. If you receive assistance from the Council to maintain your garden and/or collect your dustbins, Rykneld Homes can also assist in transferring these services over to our Decant property.

You will continue to be charged rent on your substantive tenancy in accordance with the tenancy agreement. A failure to pay rent may result in possession proceedings being issued by the Council. There will be no rent payable for the Decant Premises.

It is your responsibility to notify the Council's Revenues Team of the temporary move who will advise you accordingly, and assess where payment is required. The Council reserves the right, where appropriate and acting reasonably, to reimburse utility costs beyond the initial twelve-week period where delay to the works is attributable to the Council, its contractors or circumstances outside the Occupant's control.





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