



Your information guide:

Demolition of Lambton,
Londonderry and Lumley Towers

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What is happening

Following a period of consultation with you and your neighbours, our Board has made the difficult decision to approve the demolition of Lambton, Londonderry and Lumley towers. We did not take this decision lightly. It reflects our commitment to providing warm, safe and decent homes for our customers.

We understand this news may bring uncertainty and upset, and we want to reassure you that you will be fully supported throughout this process. This guide outlines what happens next, how we'll help you find a new home, and the practical and financial support available to you.



Meet your local neighbourhood team

We know this is a significant change, and we're committed to making it as smooth as possible. We have a dedicated team to support all customers of Lambton, Londonderry and Lumley towers, so if you have questions, concerns, or just want to talk, please reach out to your Neighbourhood Team. You can contact anyone from your Neighbourhood Team by calling **0191 525 5051** Monday to Thursday 9am to 4pm and Friday 9am to midday.



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We will also be hosting drop-in sessions in Londonderry tower cafe, every Wednesday, between 1pm – 4pm, so you can get support in person.

What happens next

1. Understanding your housing needs.

We will work with you to find a suitable, comfortable, and secure home that meets your needs. Once we have done this, you will need to move out of your current home.

First, your local Neighbourhood Team will carry out a personal Housing Needs Assessment with you. This will help us understand:

- The type and size of home you need
- The support and assistance that we will provide to enable you to move as easily as possible to your new home
- Any additional support that you may need to help you move to your new home
- Any accessibility or health-related requirements
- Your preferred location within Sunderland

Based on your assessment, we will offer you up to three suitable properties. If none of these are right for you, we will work with you to understand your housing needs before offering any more properties.

If you do not want to remain with Gentoo, our team can still support you until you terminate your tenancy

When will I have my Housing Needs Assessment?

We expect to have all of these conversations completed by October and we felt the fairest way to order these was by length of tenancy (how long you have been a Gentoo customer).

For example. If you have a continuous tenancy of more than 40 years, we expect to have your Housing Needs Assessment completed by September. If you have a continuous tenancy of 2 years, we expect to complete your Housing Needs Assessment completed by end of October.



Finding a new home

2. How does bidding work?

We have placed you in Band 1+, which is our highest priority banding when bidding on a home.

We rank bids and create shortlists for each property. For customers living in Lambton, Londonderry or Lumley towers, your bids will be ranked based on continuous tenancy length. This is the length of time you have been a Gentoo customer. For example, if two customers from Lambton, Londonderry or Lumley towers bid on the same property, the customer who has been a Gentoo customer longest will receive priority.

3. How to find your new home with us.

We advertise available properties every Wednesday at 2pm. Each advert runs for 7 days until midday the following Wednesday. You can apply to join or bid for a home on our online housing register at gentoo.housingjigsaw.co.uk

We will have staff in the cafe at Londonderry Tower every Wednesday when the new properties are listed. We will also be installing noticeboards in your building with printed adverts for available properties. This will be updated every week.

For customers who do not have access to the internet, or do not feel confident using a computer, we will help you to bid. This means we can bid on suitable properties for you, using the information you gave us in your Housing Needs Assessment.



How we will support you

If you are a Gentoo customer, you are entitled to compensation under the Home Loss Payments Regulations 2023 scheme. This payment is £8,100 and will be paid when you end your tenancy at Lambton, Londonderry or Lumley tower. We will review any rent arrears or other debts on your account before making the statutory home loss payment and discuss your specific circumstances with you.

For customers moving to a new Gentoo property, we will also provide additional financial support of up to £1,500 to help cover things like:

- Decorating your new home
- Installing carpets or flooring
- Purchasing household items such as furniture or window coverings

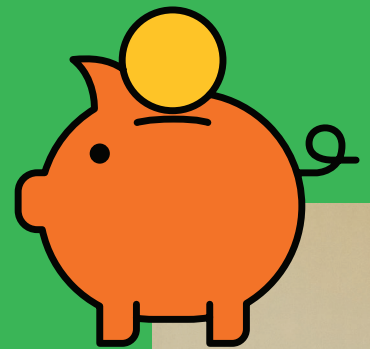
Members from your dedicated Housing Team can support you in making these choices.

Additional support

We understand that moving involves more than just finding a new home. That's why we will also help with the following, if you need it:

- Financial support
- Disconnection and reconnection of white goods
- Removal firm and packing service
- Broadband, telephone, and Sky reconnections
- Mail redirection
- Support in registering with a new GP or dentist
- Helping you update council tax and electoral roll information

There may be other support or guidance you need from the team that isn't listed above. Please contact any member of your Neighbourhood Team who will support you in any way they can.



Useful links

If you need help accessing the internet or any of the services below, we are here to help. Please get in touch with a member of the team.

You may need to find a new doctor. To locate your nearest GP, visit:
www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-gp

If you're moving within the Sunderland area, you can update your council tax details here:
www.sunderland.gov.uk/movinghome

Managing finances during a move can be challenging. Our free Money Matters service offers guidance and support to help you stay on track:
www.gentogroup.com/moneymatters

If you're facing financial difficulties or need help understanding your debts, there are organisations offering free, impartial and non-judgemental advice:

www.adviceuk.org.uk/
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money
www.gov.uk/civil-legal-advice
www.moneyhelper.org.uk
nationaldebtline.org
www.stepchange.org

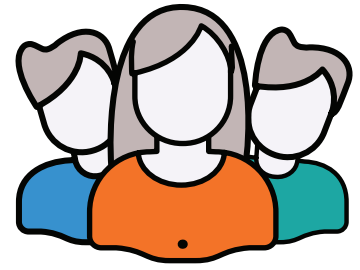
Moving home can be emotionally overwhelming. If you need someone to talk to, support is available:

Sunderland Mind
Mental health and wellbeing support
0191 565 7218
www.sunderlandmind.co.uk

Samaritans
Free, confidential support available 24/7
116 123



Frequently asked questions



“Why do I need to move?”

We know your home is more than just a place to live, it's where you've built memories, relationships, and routines. The decision to demolish Londonderry, Lambton and Lumley towers was made after careful consultation and consideration. These buildings have been home to customers for many years, but they no longer meet the standards we want for our homes. By moving, you'll have the opportunity to live in a property that's better suited to your long-term needs, with improved safety.

“Will I be forced to leave?”

We understand that this may feel unsettling. While the move is necessary due to the demolition, we are committed to working with you in a way that feels respectful and supportive. You won't be rushed or left to figure things out alone, we'll be with you every step of the way. We estimate we will have all customers moved and settled into their next homes by May 2027.

“How will Gentoo help me find a new home?”

Your Neighbourhood Team will meet with you to carry out a Housing Needs Assessment. This is a friendly, one-to-one conversation where we'll talk about what kind of home you need including size, accessibility, and location preferences. We'll use this information to match you with homes that suit your lifestyle and circumstances.

“Will I get to choose where I move to?”

During our conversation about your Housing Needs Assessment, we'll take the time to talk with you about where you'd like to live and explore what properties are available in those areas. We will help you make a well-informed decision about where you'd feel most at home.

We want you to feel comfortable and happy in your new home. You'll be offered up to three suitable properties, and you'll have the opportunity to view each one before making any decisions. If getting to the viewings is a challenge, we're here to help with travel arrangements to make things easier for you. And if none of the options feel quite right, we'll keep working with you until we find something that does.

“How long will I have to move?”

We'll work with you to agree on a timeline that suits your situation. Our goal is to make this move as smooth and manageable as possible, and we'll give you plenty of notice before any move takes place. We estimate we will have all customers moved and settled into their next homes by May 2027.

“Can Gentoo help with the actual move?”

Yes. We can arrange a removal firm and even a packing service if you need it. We'll also help with disconnecting and reconnecting your white goods, setting up broadband and TV services, and making sure your mail is redirected. If you're moving to a new area, we'll help you register with a new GP and dentist too.

What happens to my tenancy?

Your tenancy with Gentoo continues. You won't lose any of your rights or status as a customer. We'll make sure your new tenancy reflects your current agreement and that you feel secure in your new home.

“Does the home loss payment affect the benefit payments I receive?”

Home loss payments are not considered income, but they may be treated as savings for means-tested benefits. If your savings exceed £6,000 at the end of your assessment period, you will need to notify the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) before the period ends. We would recommend keeping receipts for any purchases and updating the DWP when your savings fall below £6,000.

Our Money Matters Team would be available to support you if you have any questions regarding your personal circumstances.

To contact our Money Matters Team, you can:

- call 0300 123 2004
- email moneymatters@gentoogroup.com

“Would any outstanding rent be deducted from the £8,100 home loss payment?”

We would review any rent arrears or other debts on your account before making the statutory home loss payment to you. We would discuss your specific circumstances with you.



“What if I need help bidding for a home?”

We know that online bidding can sometimes feel confusing or stressful, especially if you’ve never done it before. That’s why we offer supported bidding, our team can help you place bids or even do it on your behalf. We’ll also be in your building every Wednesday to help in person, and we’ll display printed adverts of available homes on noticeboards.

“What if I’m feeling overwhelmed or anxious about the move?”

You’re not alone. This is a big change, and it’s completely normal to feel worried or unsure. Our team is here to listen and support you. We’ve also included contact details for local support services in this guide whether you need emotional support, financial advice, or just someone to talk to, help is available.



Additional support services

We understand that moving home especially under these circumstances can be stressful. If you need extra support outside of the support from Gentoo, the following services are available to help you:

Emotional and mental health support

- **Sunderland Mind**
Support for mental health and wellbeing
0191 565 7218
www.sunderlandmind.co.uk
- **Samaritans (24/7)**
Free, confidential support for anyone in distress
116 123
www.samaritans.org

Financial and benefits advice

- **Citizens Advice Sunderland**
Help with benefits, debt, housing, and legal issues
0300 330 1194
www.citizensadvicesunderland.org.uk
- **Sunderland City Council welfare support**
Emergency financial help and advice
0191 520 5551
www.sunderland.gov.uk/welfaresupport

Health and care services

- **NHS 111**
Non-emergency medical advice
111
www.111.nhs.uk
- **Age UK Sunderland**
Support for older residents, including moving advice
0191 514 1131
www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland

