



SECTION 9

Housing options



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Advice on moving home

There may come a time when your home is no longer suitable for your needs. It might be too big or too small, or you may need to move to another area. Talk to us if you are considering moving for any reason.

We may be able to help you find a new home by:

- Helping to find someone for you to exchange homes with
- Advising you to apply for housing to the relevant local council that may hold housing registers for all housing associations in the area
- Advising you on how to register on Homeswapper, the national mutual exchange scheme

Mutual exchanges



A mutual exchange is when two tenants agree to swap their homes and each then takes on the conditions of the others tenancy. For many people, particularly those living in areas where there is a shortage of housing, a mutual exchange is a useful way of moving home. It can often be quicker than waiting for an offer from the local council waiting list or for one of our properties to become available. If you would like to register for an exchange please log onto www.homeswapper.co.uk, or ask our Customer Services Team for a leaflet on **01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate). Before you can exchange properties you will need written permission from us and have to sign a deed of assignment. There are specific reasons why we would not allow an exchange to proceed. To find out more, please ask for our **Information about mutual exchange** leaflet or speak to your Housing Officer .

Requesting a transfer

If you already rent a home from us and wish to move please contact your Housing Officer to discuss a transfer.

What to do when you move out

Unless you are moving to another one of our properties or doing a mutual exchange, you will need to tell us in writing at least 28 days before you plan to move. This notice period will always start from a Monday. You can always give us more notice, but if you give less we will charge you the rent to cover the notice period. We need this time to arrange for another tenant to move in.

Listed below is a checklist of things you need to do before you move out:

- Give four weeks notice in writing and include your new address. If you have to move straight away, you may be able to get Housing Benefit for the notice period. Contact your local benefits office or Housing Officer for details.
- Allow us to inspect your property before you move out, and carry out any repairs that are identified by us as being your responsibility before you leave. If you do not do this, we will have to charge you for the work.
- At the end of the notice period you must return keys by 12 noon on the Monday. If you do not do this, we will charge you an extra week's rent and the cost of changing the locks if necessary.
- Take all furniture and belongings with you and leave the property tidy and clean for the new tenant. If you do not do this, we will have to charge you the cost of any clearing and cleaning that we have to do.
- Make sure your rent is paid up to date.

You should also let the following know when you're moving and give them your new address:

- Electricity and gas companies so they can stop charging you
- Water companies so that they can stop charging you water rates
- Your phone company if you have a phone
- The Housing Benefit Office, if you receive Housing Benefit
- The Council Tax Office so that they can stop charging you Council Tax
- TV Licensing to get your licence transferred to your new address (please ask us for more information on TV licensing in sheltered housing schemes)
- The Post Office to get your mail redirected

Right to Buy and Right to Acquire

The majority of our tenants do not have the Right to Buy unless their tenancy is dated pre-1989. However, a number will have the Right to Acquire. If you wish to apply for Right to Buy or Right to Acquire you will be given an application form to be returned to us. We will then investigate if you qualify under the terms of the current legislation and advise you in writing within ten working days of receipt of your application. We will not consider applications if we have gained a possession order against you.

Social HomeBuy

As a housing association tenant you may be able to apply for Social HomeBuy. This is where you can buy as little as a 10% share of your existing home on a shared ownership lease. A discount may apply which is linked to Right to Acquire discounts. Rent is payable on the unsold share and you can buy further shares, which is known as 'staircasing'.

If you require further information on any of the options mentioned here please contact the Customer Services Team.

If you would like a copy of any of the leaflets mentioned in this section please contact us on **01452 529 255** or **08456 044 529** (local rate), or look on our website at **www.glosha.co.uk**