

This means you are responsible for:

- É any alterations they may have made to the property
- É any rent arrears on the account
- É the condition of the garden
- É any rubbish left by the other person
- É any damage caused by the other person

In other words, in taking on their tenancy you take on rights and responsibilities.

At the same time, the other tenant will take on the rights and responsibilities of your home when the Deed of Assignment for your current home is signed. It is essential that Deeds are signed for both properties on the same day or you could find yourself responsible for both properties.

When you move into your new home your landlord will be responsible for usual repairs only, so if the previous tenant, in moving out, has say damaged the hall wallpaper or taken cupboards off the wall, the landlord will not repair or replace. You are responsible. It is important that you make sure you know what is taken and what is to be left before you agree to move.

Anything else.....?

Some people arrange a three way exchange involving three people, three houses and sometimes three landlords. This may be a solution for you.

There is no fee to be paid to any landlord for administering an exchange but it does cost landlords time and effort. Please do not make an application unless you are really sure it is to proceed.

Need help?

Look at our website www.shal.org
email information@shal.org, call us on 01278 444344 or
visit our office at 2 King Square, Bridgwater TA6 3DG

MUTUAL EXCHANGES



Affordable Rented Homes

Introduction

Want to move house? Have you thought of an exchange? If so, this leaflet explains what an exchange is, how you arrange one and what it means to you legally.

What is an exchange?

An exchange is just you and someone else swapping houses. You move to their house and they move to yours. As you would expect there is more to it than that, and there are some simple rules to follow.

Any tenant of a housing association or local authority has the right to exchange except in a few specific circumstances.

When you swap houses you have to:

- É find someone to swap with
- É fill in a form for your current landlord and your proposed landlord
- É have written approval from landlords of both houses
- É move house, remembering to tell suppliers of electricity, gas and water, and housing benefit etc. authorities that you have moved.

How is it arranged?

1. You have to find someone to exchange with. This can be done by checking exchange lists at your local Council office. (They may be on computer or on paper) or by visiting www.homeswapper.co.uk or www.homefindersomerset.co.uk. You need to look to see who wants a property like your home in the area you live. Alternatively, you can advertise in some shop windows or in the local press. You can also look for adverts placed by other people.
2. Go and see the people who want to move to your area. If they are on the telephone ring first to check it is alright to call. Let them come and see your house. Tell them how much the rent is, who your landlord is and about the house. Ask the same questions yourself. Find out what sort of tenancy they have and how long it is for.

3. Fill in the forms - you have to fill in one for each landlord concerned, and so does the other person. Hand them to your landlord and wait to hear.
4. Expect your landlord to send someone out to your house - this is to look at the condition of your property and to check what you are leaving and what you are taking with you. REMEMBER to take your belongings (unless you are selling them to the tenant moving in). DO NOT TAKE any fixtures and fittings which belong to the house.
5. Your landlord will write and give permission (or not) and will tell you when the exchange can take place. Before you move you have to sign the DEED OF ASSIGNMENT and an appointment will be made for this to be done. In some cases a new tenancy will be granted. See [Protection with fixed tenancies](#) below.
6. Then you can move!

Protection with fixed tenancies

Traditionally most Council and Housing Association tenancies have had no end date. But the Government is introducing fixed-term tenancies. More like tenancies used by private landlords these run for a fixed period of time - say, five years. If you sign a Deed of Assignment of a tenancy with a fixed-term when the fixed period comes to an end so does the tenancy.

For tenants with an assured tenancy or a secure tenancy which started before 1 April 2012 there is protection and a new tenancy will be granted in place of an assignment. This does not apply to periodic assured shorthold tenancies or assured shorthold tenancies at an [affordable](#) (80% of market) rent.

What it all means

Legally, you have a right to exchange from an assured tenancy except in a few circumstances which are explained on the front of our mutual exchange application form.

When you sign the Deed of Assignment you are agreeing to take over the other person's tenancy as well as their house.