

Mutual Exchange



Moving home by swapping with someone else

A mutual exchange is where a tenant of Brighton & Hove City Council swaps home with another council or housing association tenant.

They are becoming an increasingly popular way for tenants to move, as they provide more choice about where you live and can help you to find a more suitable home.



**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Who can exchange?


All secure tenants of Brighton & Hove City Council have the legal right to exchange. There are some reasons why we may not give permission for the request to go ahead and it is worth making the following checks before completing the application form:

- Are there any rent arrears?
- Is the property you wish to move into the correct size for your current household?
- Does your current property have any adaptations, or is it part of a sheltered scheme?
- Is there a current court order for possession?
- Have any alterations or improvements been carried out and, if so, do you have the correct permission from the council?
- Do you have an introductory tenancy, if so you need to wait until it becomes secure.

If any of the above apply, please contact our Housing Customer Services team for further advice on the next steps you need to take. Call them on **01273 293030** or email

housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk

We try to work with residents to overcome any barriers. If an application is refused, we will explain why and tell you what needs to change to allow for a successful application in the future.



How to find a mutual exchange?

The easiest way to find a suitable home to swap with is to register on the HomeSwapper and Exchange Locata websites. HomeSwapper is the UK's largest online mutual exchange service for council and housing association residents, while Exchange Locata is used locally within Brighton & Hove to advertise and search for potential properties.

www.homeswapper.co.uk

www.exchangelocata.org.uk

www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mutual-exchange

If you don't have access to the internet, the Housing Customer Services team can help you. You can also find potential mutual exchanges by word of mouth, advertising in newspapers, Facebook or by placing contact cards in shop windows.

What happens next?

When you have found someone to exchange with, all parties need to complete a mutual exchange application form. You can get the form from www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mutual-exchange, or by contacting Housing Customer Services. This form must be completed by the tenant. Please take care to complete the application form in full, which will help avoid any unnecessary delays in the checking process.

Things to check

Once we receive your form, we will contact you to arrange appointments to inspect your home and carry out the necessary gas and electric tests.

It is your responsibility to check the home you want to move to thoroughly, taking into account the location, any outstanding repairs, room sizes, layout of property and any part of the property you will be expected to maintain. For example, this could be a bigger garden or alterations not covered by the repairs service.

A condition of mutual exchanges is that each tenant accepts the home in its current condition. We will still carry out repairs for which we are responsible, but please be aware that if the home you are moving to has had any improvements or alterations carried out, you may be expected to take on their maintenance.

As you are taking over the other person's tenancy by way of assignment, there may be changes to your tenancy conditions or type of tenancy, for example there may be a 'no pets' clause or the tenancy may be fixed-term.

A fixed-term tenancy is offered by some other housing providers for a set period of time, rather than a lifelong tenancy. It is important that you find out how long the fixed period will be and check whether this arrangement is suitable for your household.

Please also take the time to check any other changes to the tenancy conditions, along with the new rent or other service charges you will be responsible for paying.

You should not make any plans to move until you have received written permission from your landlord, Brighton & Hove City Council.

Making a decision

We will give you a final decision within 42 days of the application form being submitted to us. We will request a reference if you are swapping with a housing association or another council.

If we have any queries, we will normally contact you by phone to request further information. Please ensure to include your correct contact details on the form so we can get in touch with you easily.

Personal safety

Whether viewing someone else's home or showing your own, we recommend that you take some basic precautions to ensure your safety. Please keep the following in mind when viewing a property:

- Try to arrange the viewing during daylight
- Try to avoid viewing or showing your own home alone - have a friend or relative with you
- Tell someone when and where you're going
- Have a mobile phone with you and make sure it is switched on and fully charged

Please refer to the HomeSwapper website for more tips and advice.

Please send your completed mutual exchange application form to:

Re-housing Team

Brighton & Hove City Council

Housing Centre, Unit 1 Fairway Trading Estate

Eastergate Road, Brighton BN2 4QE

Email [**mutualexchange@brighton-hove.gov.uk**](mailto:mutualexchange@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

Please note that either party can cancel the exchange at any point before the assignment documents are signed. Furthermore, it is a criminal offence to pay or receive any payments to carry out a mutual exchange, and tenancy action could be taken if there is evidence to support that an offence has been committed.

Supporting You

Brighton & Hove City Council would like to help as many of our tenants as possible to find the right home. If there is any support you need to help you to move - if you have any personal issues or cannot access the internet for example - please contact Housing Customer Services by calling 01273 293030 or emailing housing.customerservices@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Translation? Tick this box and take to any council office

ترجمة؟ ضع علامة في الربع وحذاها إلى مكتب البلدية. Arabic

অনুবাদ? বক্সে টিক চিহ্ন নিয়ে কাউন্সিল অফিসে নিয়ে যান। Bengali

需要翻译? 请在这方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。 Cantonese

ترجمه؟ لطفا این مربع را علامتگذاری نموده و آن را به هر یک از دفاتر شهرداری ارائه نمایید. Farsi

Traduction? Veuillez cocher la case et apporter au council. French

需要翻译? 请在这方格内划勾, 并送回任何市议会的办事处。 Mandarin

Tłumaczenie? Zaznacz to okienko i zwróć do któregokolwiek biura samorządu lokalnego (council office). Polish

Tradução? Coloque um visto na quadricula e leve a uma qualquer repartição de poder local (council office). Portuguese

Tercümesi için kareyi işaretleyiniz ve bir semt belediye bürosuna veriniz Turkish

other (please state)

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