

Mutual exchange factsheet

What is a mutual exchange?

- Allows you to swap your home with a tenant of a housing association or council
- You must have moved in or be living in the property to carry out a mutual exchange
- If you have a starter or assured shorthold tenancy, you will not be able to exchange

Things to check before an exchange

- Check your tenancy agreement to make sure you have the right to exchange e.g. if you have a starter tenancy you do not have the right to exchange within the first year
- Your tenancy is in order, you don't owe any money to us and no action is being taken for any breach of tenancy
- Your property is in an acceptable condition including the garden, there are no unauthorised alterations and/or re-chargeable repairs including any non-standard fixtures and fittings including internal doors, lighting etc outstanding and or any repairs that have been caused by damage/neglect
- Any outstanding repairs that are the responsibility of Stonewater have been booked
- The property is not too large or small for you or the incoming tenant
- You and the person you wish to exchange with have seen each other's properties
- The property meets your needs and requirements. If you have an adaptation in your property there is confirmation that these meet the needs of the incoming tenant
- Each tenant has an individual email address, as this will be required for documentation
- Each party is able to provide a witness with their own email address as this will be required for the documentation

Some of the reasons why an exchange could be refused

- Stonewater may refuse the exchange where applicable in accordance with our policies, tenancy terms and/or all legislation
- There has been a breach of tenancy including rent arrears or there has been action taken for anti-social behaviour

- Where the Stonewater tenant has already exchanged property within the last 6 months
- The property is not in an acceptable condition including the garden/s
- The incoming tenant being unable to afford the property following an affordability check and the tenancy does not allow for an exchange
- The property is designated for a specific customer group or need

What happens next?

- We will complete a property inspection. A member of our team will discuss the best way to do this with you.
- The incoming party will also be invited to take part in the property inspection.
- If you are exchanging with a tenant of another landlord then we will ask for a reference from them and they will ask for a reference for you from us.
- We will give you a decision within 42 days of receiving application forms from all parties exchanging.
- You must not move until you have written permission from us to do so and you have signed the necessary paperwork. If you do, you will become an illegal occupant. This may result in you losing your home as you will have no right to return to your current home as you will have breached your tenancy.

What happens if the move is agreed?

- We will agree a date with you and your exchange partner and landlord. We must have two clear working weeks between giving permission and the exchange date.
- An energy survey will need to be carried out before the exchange date.
- We will book a gas and electric safety check to take place in the first week after the exchange.
- All paperwork will be completed electronically using digital signatures prior to the move date.
- You will need to pay 2 weeks rent and service charges on or just after the day of exchange. You will be contacted with instructions on how to make this payment.
- You will need to arrange to swap keys with your exchange partner.
- You agree to accept the property in its present condition and that Stonewater will only carry out repairs as stated in the Tenancy Agreement once complete.
- Stonewater will not become involved in any dispute between parties to an exchange.

