

Council schemes

Some councils operate their own exchange scheme or have a mutual exchange register. Many councils have conditions about who can exchange, and what exchanges are permitted. No exchange may take place till it has been approved by both landlords. Criteria may vary from one area to another.

- Usually an exchange will not be permitted if it results in one, or both, properties being under-occupied or over-crowded. However, some councils will co-operate in a 'three-way exchange' and find a property for an incoming tenant who wants a small flat, if the result is that a larger family property comes back into the council's stock.
- Most councils will not permit an exchange if either tenant is in arrears, or has a Notice of Seeking Possession or court order against them for some breach of tenancy conditions.
- Most councils require that no costs will fall on the local authority as a result of an exchange e.g. for repairs or re-decoration. The property should be accepted as seen.
- Some landlords require an outgoing tenant to make good any damage before an exchange is approved.

You may also be able to find an exchange partner by advertising in shop windows, or, in the case of sheltered/retirement housing, by placing a postcard on the notice board at the scheme itself (with the permission of the scheme manager).

Other exchange schemes

The following are internet based schemes for tenants of councils and housing associations who wish to exchange. EAC is not responsible for the content of these websites, and does not recommend or endorse any of the providers. We do not know how successful these schemes are, or how many matches or swaps they have been able to arrange.

- **HomeSwapper** – UK-wide database. There is a charge for this service, but where landlords have a partnership arrangement with **HomeSwapper** there is no charge to the tenant. Currently over 600 landlords have partnered with the scheme. If the landlord is not a member the tenant will have to pay a modest charge (£7.45 per quarter or £26.95 per annum – June 2010).
www.homeswapper.co.uk
- **House Exchange** – UK-wide database and forum.
www.houseexchange.org.uk
- **East London Lettings Company** – on-line scheme for exchanges with homes in East London –Barking and Dagenham, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Thurrock, Southwark and Waltham Forest.
www.ellchoicehomes.org.uk

The Seaside and Country Homes Scheme

This is not a mutual exchange scheme, but can enable tenants of councils or housing associations who are living in London boroughs and are over 60 to move to the coast. There are nearly 80 schemes in various coastal locations from Cornwall to Lincolnshire. These properties were originally provided by the London County Council/LCC (later the Greater London Council/GLC) to encourage older Londoners to move away and free up larger properties for families with young children. People who move out of London under this scheme need to be aware that they are most unlikely ever to be able to return to London, except on an exchange basis.

For more information and applications forms contact Seaside and Country Homes at 1st Floor, 242 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1AU. Tel. 08450 21 20 20, website: www.housingmoves.org or e-mail: enquiries@housingmoves.org

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