Moving home
On the move

How you can move
If you are a secure Harlow Council Tenant, you can move home by doing one of the following:

• Moving to another of our properties by using the:
  • Mutual Exchange Scheme
  • Housing Allocations Scheme

• Moving via Help to Buy. Shared Ownership Scheme is where you buy a share of your home and rent the remainder from a Registered Provider – Moat Housing.

• Moving to a property which is not owned by any Council or Housing Association.

• Move via the Private Rented Sector – there are a range of housing options in the private rented sector and further details can be found on www.rightmove.com

Mutual Exchange
Mutual Exchange allows secure Council or Registered Provider tenants to exchange their homes by making sure that:

• The other tenant really wants to swap
• You can find someone to swap with by entering your details the national mutual exchange website www.Homeswapper.co.uk
  This will automatically check for any possible swaps and will send regular ‘match alerts’ to you.

By your own means i.e. advert in the newsagents, word of mouth.

You will be responsible for any alterations needed to the home you move into. This includes internal decoration and, for example, moving kitchen units to fit your appliances. We strongly advise that you view the property that you want to move into very carefully.

If you find a person who is willing to swap properties, you should both complete and return the mutual exchange forms, available at the Civic Centre. You must then wait for our written approval, giving you the right to swap properties.

Approval depends on:
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• Both parties having a clear rent account
• Satisfactory inspection of your homes
• Both properties being suitable for their new tenants. For example, not too big or built for special needs such as disabled persons or sheltered accommodation

Please Note: It is unlawful to offer a money payment to another in order to secure a mutual exchange. Anyone doing so risks prosecution and possible imprisonment. Visit www.harlow.gov.uk/mutual-exchange for more information.

Housing Allocations Scheme
The Housing Allocations Scheme is a system for tenants wishing to transfer to another property. Under this scheme you are placed into a priority band and are able to bid against vacant properties.

Financial incentive scheme
If you are living in a property, which is too big for you and you are considering moving to a smaller home or sheltered accommodation, you may qualify for a financial incentive.

Please note the Council will not accept a bid for a vacant property where a debt is owed as a former or current tenant arrear, or if the current home is not considered to be in a satisfactory condition by the Landlord. These standards will be detailed in your signed tenancy agreement.

Application forms are available online at www.harlow.gov.uk/tenant-moves-incentive-scheme or from Contact Harlow.
Leaving your old home
You must give us four weeks written notice if you want to move out of your home. Please contact the Council’s Housing Service via Contact Harlow when you wish to give notice to vacate your home. We will arrange to visit you before you leave.

You are responsible for making sure that you:

• Move all your belongings from your old home to your new one - this includes all carpets and furniture, clearing the loft and any sheds in the garden.

• Leave the property clean and in a good state of repair. This includes fixtures, fittings and decorations. If you have carried out any alterations without getting permission, you must return the property to its original condition. Any damage to the property may be recharged to you.

• Return the property to us vacant. This means that no one should be occupying the property at the time you leave i.e. a lodger.

• Secure the property. This includes turning off the gas, electricity and water supplies, and locking all doors and windows.

• Advise utility companies of your move and give us the name of the companies who supplied your gas and electricity and water.

• Return all the keys to us. You must ensure that all keys, including keys to shared areas, sheds, balconies, windows and garages are returned to us by 12.00 noon at the latest on the Monday following the completion of the four week’s notice period. Failure to do so will incur a further week’s rent.

• Pay any outstanding amounts on your rent account.

• Give us details of your forwarding address.

For advice and information on moving house please visit www.harlow.gov.uk/moving or call Contact Harlow on 01279 446655.