



# Moving Home



**Grŵp Cynefin**

Mwy na thai • More than housing

## **Important things to remember when you move home**

If you want to move but want to stay a tenant of Grŵp Cynefin you will need to contact us for details of the process to follow in your area. We will discuss with you your reasons for moving and give you advice on the other housing options that may be open to you.

You cannot normally transfer to another Grŵp Cynefin home if:

- you have a starter tenancy
- you have rent arrears or other tenancy related debts
- you have received a legal 'notice' from us.
- you don't have a housing need

Also if the condition of your current home means that it cannot be re-let, then we may defer your application until it is brought back up to a satisfactory standard.

When we have a suitable property available for you, we will still visit you to assess the condition of your home and identify any repairs you need to do before the move can take place



## What are my chances of moving?

You will only be considered for the type of home suitable for your family and the area or areas you have asked for.

You may also wish to consider other options for securing an alternative home. Please see “Mutual Exchange” below.

The Association also has several types of specialist housing that are particularly suitable for older people or people with disabilities. Our staff are available to help and advise you on how to apply for these schemes.

## Mutual exchange

### What is a mutual exchange?

This is when two or more tenants exchange homes. You can only exchange with another of our tenants, a tenant of a Council or a tenant of another housing association but you must obtain our permission first before taking any action to move home. You don't have to show a housing need either. If you find someone who wants to swap and both landlords are happy for you to swap, then you can with minimal paperwork. What we need to show is that you have the right to live in the house you've swapped to. If you or the other tenant has gas we'll need to do a safety test too before the new tenant moves in. We are also members of Homeswapper - a really easy way to find out whether someone wants to exchange with you.

You and the other parties in the exchange will be required to complete an exchange application form. This is the process for obtaining our permission. We will not refuse permission without good reason. If you are exchanging with a tenant of another landlord, they must also obtain similar permission from their landlord.

When you exchange, you must accept the other property as it is left. You take on responsibility for any alterations or improvements made by the tenant you are exchanging with and for any damage they may have caused.

It is illegal to pay any one, or offer other incentives, to persuade someone to exchange with you. If this happens and is discovered after the event all people involved could be made to leave their homes. If you exchange without obtaining our permission you can be made to move back or made to leave the home you have moved to. You and your family could then find yourselves homeless.

### Getting approval to exchange

Each landlord must reply within the published timescales. The law on exchanges allows for up to 42 days for the whole process to run its course. We will not give approval if:

- you have a starter tenancy with the Association
- one or other of the properties is larger than necessary for the incoming tenant or is not big enough and would be overcrowded
- either tenant is breaking a condition of their existing tenancy
- one of the homes is in a sheltered or supported housing scheme and or has been adapted for a person with disabilities and the new tenant does not need these facilities.
- the house/flat has a Section 106 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Condition on it (unless the incoming tenants meets it's local connection requirements)

**Warning.** When you exchange, the terms of your new tenancy may be different from those you have currently. Please ensure that you understand fully the implications of these new terms and how they impact upon you, as this could influence your decision to proceed with the exchange. It is very important to check what your rent and service charges will be and what they include, and what repairs you might be responsible for. You should also be aware that some of your rights could also be affected.

## How do I find someone to exchange with?

You are responsible for finding someone to exchange with. We do not hold a list but encourage tenants to display a card in local shop windows, use social media, other housing association or local Council Offices or go to [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk).

## Is there a national mobility register?

There isn't a free national mobility service available to you any longer. However, Grŵp Cynefin has become a member of Homeswapper and whilst you are our tenant we will pay your membership fee.

You may register with Homeswapper online at [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk). If you do not have access to the internet, or cannot visit your local Library to use their free service, then you can ask your Housing Officer to help you apply.

## Ending my tenancy

### Notice

You will need to write to us at least 28 days before you leave, stating that you wish to end your tenancy. You must sign and date your letter. In the case of joint tenants we would ask that both parties sign that letter, although in law we recognise that either joint tenant can end the tenancy.

If you do not let us know you are leaving, it is our policy to charge you rent for the four weeks notice period you should have given.

We will agree the exact date when your tenancy will end. You must continue to pay rent and keep to all the tenancy conditions until that date.

## Inspecting my home

When we receive your termination notice we will need to inspect your home as soon as possible. The Association will contact you to arrange a suitable time. The inspection is required to assess the condition of the property, and identify any repairs or decoration that we consider to be your responsibility to do before you leave. The sooner we are able to inspect, the more time you will have to do any repairs or decoration. We will also discuss with you the arrangements for leaving keys and service documents. We will leave you with a 'key safe' and you will leave your keys in the safe when you leave the property for the last time.

After the inspection we will confirm in writing what you need to do before you leave. It is our policy to charge you in line with our schedule of charges for any work you do not do, or we have to re-do.

## Clearing and cleaning the property

You will need to remove all your belongings, including your fridge, cooker, carpets and so on, and get rid of all your rubbish. You must leave the property in a clean and tidy condition, as agreed during the inspection. This includes any loft spaces, the garden, driveway or shed.

We will charge you the cost for any clearing or cleaning we have to pay for. Doing it yourself will be far cheaper.



## Checklist for moving out

You will need to leave all door keys before midday on the Monday the day after your tenancy ends in the key safe supplied. If you do not do this you will be required to pay a further week's rent or until we receive the keys/change the lock.

Before handing in the keys, make sure that:

- you are up to date with your rent and service charge payments
- all your furniture and belongings, including carpets, have been removed from your home including any items from the shed, garage, loft or garden
- you have locked all windows and doors
- the property is clean and you have done any repairs or redecoration you are responsible for
- no rubbish is left anywhere inside or outside the property
- you have contacted the gas, electricity, water and phone companies to pay your bills and to inform them of your last day meter readings
- you have told the Department of Work and Pensions and the local Housing Benefit Office you are moving, if you claim benefits
- you have arranged for any of your own gas appliances to be disconnected by a 'Gas Safe' registered engineer

Everyone must leave the property. Please note you remain responsible for paying the rent until everyone has left, the property is empty and has been cleared of all personal belongings and effects, and all keys are returned.



## Abandonment

Obviously we would prefer to receive notice from our tenants wishing to leave their home but on the rare occasions, when tenants leave their homes without warning, the Association has a process to follow.

In order to make the dwelling safe, we will immediately change the locks and disconnect the services, and place a notice on the door or window to say we have done so.

We will serve a formal Notice to Quit on the property, and gather evidence to confirm you are no longer using the property as your only, and principal home.

When the Notice expires and if keys have still not been returned we will arrange for the property to be cleared. You will then be responsible for paying all costs – legal, repair, decoration, disconnection, clearing and cleaning costs – incurred by the Association.

