

What is House Exchange?



House Exchange is a website designed to bring people together who are looking to swap their home. So if you are a Flagship customer looking to downsize, find a larger home or simply move to another area, then why not register with *House Exchange*.

An approved Flagship partner, *House Exchange* is a service which lets customers of local authority and housing associations across the UK search for mutual exchanges.

There are thousands of customers registered across the country and you can search for local, regional or national exchanges.

Using the site is easy and free. Simply visit **flagship.houseexchange.org.uk** and complete your details online.

How do I register?

The quickest and easiest way to register is to visit the *House Exchange* website at **flagship.houseexchange.org.uk** and complete your details.

After your details have been checked, you will be sent your unique ID number and password through the post (for security reasons), so you can start using the website.

You can update or remove your details at any time.

I don't have access to a computer, can I still register?

If you don't have a computer, you can ask a friend or member of your family to register you and do online searches on your behalf. Alternatively, you can use a public access computer such as in your local library.

If you are a Flagship customer, you can call Flagship Response on **0808 168 4555** (freephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and we will help register you over the phone.

How do I find someone to exchange with?

Anyone can search the database but you must be registered and have a password to view the other people's contact details.

Once you have registered and your details are approved, your property will appear in the database and you will be able to use four different searches to help you find a match:

Search for a specific property Use this search to find out what house exchanges are available.

Search for a match both ways Find all available direct home swaps with this search.

Search for people who want your property If you want to home swap and are fairly open about what you are looking for, this search will find everyone looking for a property like yours.

Three-way search A three-way exchange is useful where you have found someone to swap with but they don't want to move into your property. If you can find someone to complete the loop this is what is known as a three way swap. You will need to register to search for a possible three way swap.

It is important to keep the site up-to-date, as your details will be removed if you don't log in for three months. If you are still interested in searching for a match then please re-register.

Remember: many of the details that you enter on the site as part of your registration will be visible to other members of the public, so please think carefully about what you include.

You may not have the right to mutually exchange your home if you have a temporary or short-term tenancy. Please contact your community manager if you have any questions.

What size property can I have?

Normally, when properties are offered through the Housing Register, you will only be offered the size of the property that you require to house everyone who lives with you on a permanent basis. However, one spare bedroom is normally acceptable. We will not agree to an exchange where you would be overcrowded.

What happens when I find a suitable match?

You need to contact us and complete a mutual exchange form to proceed. Please ask your community manager or visit our website at flagship-housing.co.uk. This explains the conditions which must be met for a mutual exchange to go ahead. You cannot move without your landlord's consent.

You will need to be realistic about the time it will take for you to be able to move. Once you have informed us in writing that you want the exchange to go ahead, we will confirm within 42 days if the exchange can proceed.

We will need to inspect your property and you will be asked to put right any damage before the exchange goes ahead. Your rent account will need to be up-to-date. The landlord of the other property will do the same and both landlords will then exchange reports.

If the exchange is agreed, we will contact you to agree a convenient date to move. We will only refuse an exchange in limited circumstances and will give you the reasons why. For further details, please see our guidance notes for customers: grounds for refusing a mutual exchange, available from your community manager or via our website at flagship-housing.co.uk.

Important: you must agree to take over any home you wish to move to in its current condition.

Compensation for improvements

You may not be eligible to receive compensation for improvements if you swap your home as part of a mutual exchange. If you have any questions, please contact your community manager.

Electric and gas safety checks

Electric and gas safety checks must be carried out on Flagship properties before an exchange is approved.

Right to buy

If you exchange your home, your rights may not be the same as you have now. In some instances you may lose your right to buy. If you have any queries or concerns, please speak to your community manager.

What about joint tenancies?

To complete a mutual exchange when you have a joint tenancy, both tenants will have to agree to an exchange taking place, as both will have to sign the deed of assignment.

What can I do if I am unhappy with the way my exchange is being dealt with?

We hope that everything will go smoothly but if you are unhappy with the way your exchange is being handled, please speak to your community manager. However, if you are still unhappy then you can pursue your complaint through our complaints procedure.

For more information, please contact your community manager or call us at Flagship Response on **0808 168 4555**.