

Your guide

to exchanging your home with another resident

This leaflet tells you about how you can move home by swapping with another resident. This is called a Mutual Exchange.

Who can exchange homes?

A Mutual Exchange is where two or more people agree to swap their homes with one another. If you hold either a secure or assured tenancy you may be able to swap homes with another resident from L&Q, another housing association or local authority.

How to find someone to swap with

We recommend that you register with HomeSwapper, a mutual exchange service on the internet available to L&Q residents for free!

Registering on this website will allow you to advertise your own property and search, view and match other properties that have been added by housing association and local authority residents across the UK. Don't forget to add photographs of your home when advertising, as more people will look at adverts that contain photographs.

You could also try:

- Registering with other internet services,
- Placing adverts in local shops, newspapers or libraries,
- Contacting your local authority to see if it runs a scheme, or
- Speaking to family, friends and/or neighbours.

For further information you can see our HomeSwapper leaflet, go directly to the website www.homeswapper.co.uk or contact L&Q Direct on **0800 015 6536** or e-mail L&QDirect@lqgroup.org.uk

What to know before swapping

It is illegal to offer incentives for an exchange. Do not offer or accept any money to make an exchange happen.

Permission must be given from both landlords before a date can be agreed for you to swap homes. (See How to request permission for an exchange below). Even after you have obtained our permission to exchange, if your rent account is in arrears the exchange can not take place.

Please be aware that if you swap homes without permission or when permission is refused you will be expected to move back into your original home.

When you swap homes you will also swap tenancies, this will mean you may have different rights and obligations to what you currently have. Please read the terms and conditions of the tenancy of anyone you wish to swap with.

Try to visit the property you are interested in more than once. Find out how much the new rent will be in and ask about household bills (e.g. gas, electric and council tax).

Ensure you are satisfied with the condition and decoration of the home as properties are taken “as seen”:

- Check to see if there is any damage or outstanding repairs that will become your responsibility (do not assume the landlord will be responsible).
- Agree on any items that will be taken or left behind.
- Find out if the landlord is planning any work to the property and/or area in the near future.

How to request permission for an exchange

Once you have found someone to swap with you will need to complete and return our Mutual Exchange Request form, which is available by contacting L&Q Direct on 0800 015 6536 or e-mail L&QDirect@lqgroup.org.uk

We will then obtain a reference from the other resident’s landlord and give a reference about your tenancy to them. We will need to pass on information such as family size and your rent account balance. Any information given will be covered by the guidelines in the Data Protection Act 1998, by signing the request form you will be consenting for this data to be given to the other landlord.

We will also arrange to conduct an inspection of your home. Any work that needs to be rectified will be agreed with you before the exchange goes ahead.

We will grant or refuse permission within the statutory period of 42 days.

Can an exchange be refused?

We will not unreasonably withhold permission for you to exchange your home. The reasons why we would refuse are set out in the Housing Act 1985. The most common reasons for refusal are:

- A court order has been made to give up possession of the property
- A Notice of Seeking Possession has been served and is still in force
- The property will be too big or too small for the incoming tenant(s)
- The property (or scheme) has been designed or substantially adapted for a specific purpose (e.g. the property has been adapted so that a physically disabled person can live there or sheltered housing for elderly persons)

How does the exchange occur?

Once we are happy that the exchange can proceed, we will arrange an appointment in order for all parties to complete and sign a Deed of Assignment.

Contact us

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L&Q is an exempt charity