

# Mutual Exchange

## Your guide to exchanging homes



### **What is a Mutual Exchange?**

A Mutual Exchange is where you swap your home with another tenant. If you are a Lincolnshire Rural tenant you can swap with a tenant of another council or a tenant of a Housing Association.

Exchanges are a good way to move without having to wait a long time on the transfer list or a waiting list with another council.

To arrange a Mutual Exchange you need to find a tenant who wants to swap with you. When you find a property that may be suitable, it is up to you to contact the tenant directly.

Think very carefully before you exchange with someone. If you do exchange, you take on all of the rights and responsibilities of the previous tenant.

### **I think that I have found someone to exchange with, what do I do next?**

- You need to contact the Association in writing, advising us that you wish to carry out a Mutual Exchange and the details of the person you wish to exchange with.
- Make sure that you don't owe any money to the Association (and the person that you are exchanging with does not owe money to their landlord), and that you are not in breach of your tenancy conditions. This means that your home and gardens are in good order and that you have not had any issues with Anti-social Behaviour.
- We will arrange to visit you and inspect your home and advise you of any works that will need to be carried out. We will also arrange for gas and electrical work to be carried out on the agreed exchange date.
- If you are exchanging with someone who has another landlord, we will send the other landlord a reference about your tenancy and request a reference from the other landlord about their tenancy.
- We will normally get back to you within 6 weeks of the date of your application to exchange; we will keep you informed about the progress.
- As soon as we give permission an agreed date by all parties will be arranged, the tenancy start date will always be a Monday.
- We will arrange for you and the person that you are exchanging with to come to the office and sign the exchange paperwork.
- You move house! You have to organise your removals and make sure that you have contacted the utilities companies.

### **Will Lincolnshire Rural do any repairs once I move in to my new property?**

- It is important to check your new home thoroughly before you move in. Look at everything, including the inside of the cupboards, behind furniture and if possible under carpets.

- Once you have moved, you are responsible for the repair or maintenance of any alterations, fixtures or fittings made by the previous tenant and **NOT** by Lincolnshire Rural. This often includes:
  - Showers;
  - Landscaping, such as patios or decking;
  - Fences, walls and gates;
  - Timber Sheds;
  - Kitchen fittings;
  - Laminate Flooring;
  - Doors; and
  - Wall or floor tiles.
- Please check with us if you are unsure.
- Lincolnshire Rural will re-charge you for any repairs that are needed as a result of damage or neglect. Lincolnshire Rural will carry out repairs in line with our repairs Policy which is outlined in the tenant handbook. This outlines which repairs Lincolnshire Rural is responsible for, and which repairs residents are responsible for. If you are unsure whether or not you will be responsible for a repair please ask us.

### **What else do I need to consider?**

- Agree with the tenants you are exchanging with, what will be left in the home when you move in. We will put this in writing before you move.
- Remember, you will be taking over all the other people's rights and responsibilities regarding the home.
- You cannot move in to another property where you are under occupying by more than 1 bedroom.
- Mutual Exchanges have a high failure rate. Avoid spending any money or doing any packing before you are absolutely sure that you are moving and that the Mutual Exchange has been agreed.
- If you have adaptations for a disabled person in your home you might not be able to get the same adaptations in your new home. Please check first.
- If you are in doubt- **DO NOT SIGN OVER YOUR TENANCY OR MOVE IN.** Come and discuss it with us.

- We may refuse or delay your request for an exchange if:
  - You or the person you are exchanging with owe money to the landlord;
  - You have broken your tenancy conditions. For example, if your home or garden is in poor condition, or there have been issues with Anti-social Behaviour;
  - The exchange is not suitable for the size of your household; and
  - If either of the properties are not in acceptable condition.

We will write to you to explain why and advise you of what you need to do. You must not move until you have written permission from your landlord and have signed the forms to formally exchange your tenancy with the other person.

Finally, if you want any help or advice please contact the Housing Officer on 01790 754219.