

HOME-OPTIONS & MOVING PROPERTIES



This booklet contains the following information:-

Moving Property
Mutual Exchange
Transferring Properties
Incentive Scheme
Home-Swap System



Home-Options

In March 2007 we changed the way in which we allocate houses, and introduced a Choice Based Letting system called Home-Options.

Home-Options is a partnership between Derbyshire Dales District Council, Dales Housing, High Peak Borough Council and High Peak Community Housing, Amber Valley Housing Ltd, Amber Valley Borough Council, Three Valleys Housing and Erewash Borough Council.



How does Home-Options work?

Under Home-Options the old complicated points system has been replaced with a banding system. Applicants will be placed in one of four priority bands from A to D according to their housing need. The position in the band will depend on the date they originally applied with us for accommodation.

Instead of waiting for High Peak Community Housing or a Housing Association to offer you somewhere to live, individual properties will be advertised on a web-site and on posters displayed at local outlets. You will be able to bid for properties that interest you. Offers will then be made to the person with the highest priority that makes a bid.

Bidding for properties is simple and can be done by postal coupon, telephone, internet, text message or in person at any of our receptions.

How do I apply to Home-Options?

Applications for Home-Options can be made on line at our website, **www.home-options.org**. If you do not have a computer at home, you can visit our offices or your local library to access the website. Alternatively you can complete a paper application form.

Once your application has been completed and checked by our staff you will be sent a welcome letter. This will give you your reference number, the band you are in and your priority date. You will also be sent some bidding coupons and a scheme guide giving full information about the new system, and a step-by-step guide on how to bid.

How do I find out what properties are available?

Properties advertised under Home-Options will appear on **www.home-options.org** web site and on posters displayed in our offices and libraries. You will not be able to bid unless you have completed a Home-options application form, and received your welcome letter.

What happens when I bid for a property?

When a property is advertised for letting, bidding is open for 6 days on the properties advertised. All bids must be received by the advertised deadline. You can bid by postal coupon, telephone, internet, text message or in person. You can bid for up to three properties, but you must check that the property is the correct bedroom size and you are eligible for the property.

Once the bid deadline has passed, bids are placed in order according to their band and priority date. The person with the highest priority will formally be offered the property, although up to three people may be invited to view the property. If the first person refuses the property, it will be offered to the next person on the list.

Home-Options is designed to give home seekers greater choice about where they live, but it does not mean there are more properties available. If you are not offered a property we will not be able to contact you personally. However, you can check the successful bidder by looking at the website, which will tell you how many people bid for each property, as well as the band and priority date of the successful bidder.

Moving Property

As a tenant of High Peak Community Housing the time may come when you want to move house.

Some tenants whose present home is unsuitable for them (because of its size or for medical reasons) can move by transferring to another property.

But if you don't have special reasons why you need to move house, you may have to wait a very long time for a transfer. A quicker way to move can be to swap your property with another tenant - this is called a **Mutual Exchange**.

All secure tenants have the legal right to exchange their tenancy with another Council or Housing Association tenant.

However, you must get the permission of High Peak Community Housing in writing before you carry out the exchange

MUTUAL EXCHANGE

Finding an Exchange

A mutual exchange is a 'self help' option because you have to find somebody else to swap with.

High Peak Community Housing keeps a list of all those tenants who want to exchange their property. You can view it whenever you want to see if there's anyone who's looking for a property like yours. You can look at properties that people want to exchange on the Home-Options website **www.home-option.org** and click on the Mutual Exchange button, those who don't have access to a computer can use the computer on our receptions or at a local library.

You can put your name and property on the list, but you must remember that this means your details will be available for other tenants to see. You may also want to advertise for an exchange in your local shops or newspaper.

Applying for an Exchange

Once you have found somebody who wants to swap homes with you, you must write to High Peak Community Housing to ask for our permission to exchange.

Only when we have given you our written consent can you carry out the exchange.

If you exchange properties without having our consent in writing we can make you move back to your old property and you could lose your tenancy altogether.

When you write to ask for our permission we will give you a response within 42 days.

There are only certain reasons why we can withhold our permission, including:

- If either tenant has rent arrears;
- If either property is in a poor state of repair;
- If we have started possession proceedings against either tenant;
- If either property is too big or too small for the other tenant.

TRANSFERS

You can apply to transfer to another High Peak Community Housing property or Housing Association property by joining Home-Options in the same way as people looking for properties with us as explained earlier in this leaflet.

All transfer applications are assessed according to level of housing need. The banding you are awarded will be according to your level of need.

The greater your housing need, the more chance you have of being offered a transfer. For example, if your present home is unsuitable for you because of its size or for medical or social reasons, you will be awarded a higher banding than applicants who do not have any special reason to move. This means that you are likely to be offered a transfer more quickly.

You will **not normally be considered for a transfer** if there is a problem with your tenancy. If your rent is not up-to-date or your property is damaged or in a poor state of decoration or cleanliness, we will not offer you a transfer until the problem is resolved.

TRANSFER INCENTIVE SCHEME

What is the Transfer Incentive Scheme?

There is a shortage of family-sized properties available within High Peak. The Transfer Incentive Scheme is a way of rewarding and assisting tenants who are prepared to “downsize” – say move from a three-bed roomed house to a one bed roomed bungalow – and so free-up desperately needed family accommodation

Who qualifies?

If you are currently a tenant or joint tenant of High Peak Community Housing and live in a family property (2 or more bedrooms) that is bigger than you require or in a wheelchair adapted property that you do not require then you are eligible to apply.

What happens?

When you apply to the Home-Options scheme, we will identify you as potentially qualifying and will arrange for someone to visit you at home and discuss your housing needs and requirements.

Once you are registered under the scheme on Home-Options you will usually be placed in a Band A to release two or more bedrooms or Band B to release one bedroom.

What benefits are there for me?

Once you have been offered a property through our Home-Options scheme and qualify under the Tenant Incentive Scheme you will receive the following:

- A named person to guide you through the process
- £250 once you have moved (subject to all arrears and rechargeable repairs being cleared)
- Free “Carelink” Installation and complimentary “Carelink” service for the first three months of tenancy
- The cost of post being re-directed for 12 months for the tenant

Additionally, you can select one item from the following list:-

- Assistance with arranging and paying for removals with an approved remover **OR**
- A further payment of £350

Also you will choose one item from this list for every bedroom you are losing (so someone going from a four bed roomed house to a one bedroom bungalow will have 3 choices):

- Decoration of one room (tenants choice of room and colour)
- Carpet fitted for one room (tenants choice of room and colour) (upper limit on cost applies)
- £150

- Help from a caretaker for half a day (four hours) to hang pictures, curtain rails and similar small jobs (this excludes decoration)
- Plumbing in of cooker and white goods (up to two appliances)
- Assistance removing unwanted furniture

How is payment made?

The payment will be made to you once the keys to your current home have been handed in and we have inspected the property.

The cost of putting right any repairs which are your responsibility and any rent arrears which you owe will be deducted from the payment you receive.

If you would like to know more about the Transfer Incentive Scheme, please contact the Home Options Team on the numbers given at the back of this leaflet.

Moving out of the area

If you want to move outside of Derbyshire by mutual exchange, these sites may help you:

Free Exchange Services

www.council-exchange.org.uk

UK wide database and forum

www.councilexchangesite.co.uk

UK wide database and forum

Paid for Exchange Services

www.ukcouncilexchange.co.uk

www.ukhomeswap.org

www.homeswaplist.co.uk

www.homeswapper.co.uk

Further Information

If you would like more information about any of the options given in this leaflet or for information on finding housing within the High Peak, please see our leaflet Housing Options or contact your local **High Peak Community Housing Office.**



High Peak Community Housing

8am—8pm Monday to Friday

**www.hpch.co.uk
enquiries@hpch.co.uk**

General Enquiries:		0845 129 8075
	Or	01298 28430
Repairs Hotline:		0845 129 8071
Carelink:		0845 129 4877
Minicom:		0845 129 4876
SMS Text Messaging:		07800 002 264
Fax:		01457 860290
Out of Hours:		01663 752099

Head Office

**Municipal Buildings
Glossop
Derbyshire
SK13 8AF**

Fairfield Neighbourhood Office

**157 Victoria Park Rd
Fairfield
Buxton
SK17 7PE**

Gamesley Neighbourhood Office

**34 Winster Mews
Gamesley
Glossop
SK13 0LU**

Can't read this?

If you need this information in another format,
call the Business Services Team on 0845 129 8075