



# Moving home

**Tips for moving home: A guide for  
Hammersmith & Fulham tenants**



● **Moving can be a stressful experience whether you're moving yourself or we are helping with your move**

This guide takes you through the process with helpful tips and guidance about moving out of a council property.

● **Once you've found somewhere to move to**

Whether you're transferring to another council property, moving to another registered provider, or leaving social housing all together, there are certain things you'll be responsible for before you move. If you're doing a mutual exchange it's slightly different and is explained on pages 3 and 9 of this guide.

● **If you're transferring to another council or registered provider property, or you're leaving social housing:**

The first thing you should do is contact your local housing office and complete a notice to vacate form. This will let your housing officer know you're ending your tenancy at your current address.

The standard notice period we accept is four weeks but if you're moving to another one of our properties we can sometimes be flexible.

**TIP:** Even if you don't know when your new property will be ready to move in to it's worth completing a notice to vacate form as soon as possible. Your tenancy will not actually end until you return the keys and your notice period can always be extended if you're not ready to move. If you give notice to vacate too late you may find that you're still responsible for the rent on your old property after you've moved.

Once you've let your housing officer know that you'll be ending your tenancy, they will arrange to visit you to go through what you should do before you leave.





This may include:

- Removing carpets or flooring you've fitted
- Replacing any doors you have removed
- Removing any fixtures or fittings you've changed (e.g. in the bathroom or kitchen)
- Carrying out any repairs you are responsible for

The above aren't always necessary and your housing officer will agree with you what you do and don't need to do.

## ● If you're applying for a mutual exchange

With a mutual exchange, you're not technically ending your tenancy, you are assigning it to someone else. You can find advice and information about mutual exchange in our 'Mutual Exchange – A Guide for Hammersmith & Fulham council tenants' available at your local housing office or online here [www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/exchanging-your-home](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/exchanging-your-home).



Once you have completed a mutual exchange application form your housing officer will arrange to visit you to go through what you should do before the exchange goes ahead. These are generally health and safety requirements. For instance, if you've removed the kitchen fire door you'll be asked to replace this before the exchange can go ahead.

With mutual exchange, you can agree with the person you're swapping with what you'll leave in the property and what you'll take with you. This means you don't have to remove carpets and flooring unless the other person has asked you to.

## ● Preparing for a move

In this section is some advice about what you can do before you have arranged a move. If you've registered for a transfer, you may want to consider some of these tips before you've been offered a property. Finding a move can take time, so you shouldn't pack anything you might need before you've found somewhere.

## ● What will you take with you?

### Furniture/appliances

Whether or not you're moving to a smaller home, you may like to consider what you want to take with you and what you want to get rid of before you move.

You can prepare in advance by selling or giving away any items that you don't want to take with you. This may include things that won't fit in your new home. If you have items that aren't in good enough condition to sell you must arrange for them to be disposed of before you move.

There is a list of charities and organisations that can take your unwanted items at the back of this guide.

### Food

If you have lots of food in your cupboards or freezer that you don't think you'll get around to eating before you move, you should think about what you want to do about this.

If you have unwanted tinned food you can donate this to a local food bank. Information about

how to do this is here: <https://hammersmithfulham.foodbank.org.uk>.

The food bank doesn't accept frozen food so you should try to eat what you can before you move.

### Gardens

If you're lucky enough to have a garden, we expect that it's left in good condition for the next tenant.



Before you move you should mow your lawn (if you have one) and do any weeding and tidying up required.

Think about what condition you'd like your new home to be in. You can expect the family moving into the property you're leaving to have similar expectations.

If you have a shed or a garage this should also be cleared before you move. Again, if you have unwanted gardening tools or other equipment you should arrange to sell or give these away before you move.

### Packing

When you've found somewhere to move to you should start packing up your belongings. This can be tiring so it is worth packing items that you don't regularly use in advance so you don't have to rush everything at the last minute.





## ● Some packing tips:

**Don't overfill the boxes** – if you place too many items in one box it may be too heavy to lift or the box may split. If you've got heavy items think about putting one or two in a box along with some less heavy items so you can still fill the box up.

**Label your boxes clearly** – it's a good idea to write on the boxes which room they are from and a quick note about what they contain. This will make it much easier when it comes to unpacking the box in your new home.

**Wrap up your breakables** – if you put crockery or delicate items in a box without protecting them it's much more likely they will break during the moving process. You can wrap items in newspaper or bubble wrap to minimise the chance of breakages. You can even wrap items in scarfs or other clothing to make sure any delicate items in the box are well protected. If you don't do this, the removal company won't be held responsible for any breakages during the move.

**Clear a space to put the boxes you have packed** – you don't want to be tripping over your boxes and you need space to pack so it's a good idea to clear a corner to stack the boxes you've packed.

**Remember, heavier boxes should be at the bottom.**

## **Have a box of 'essentials'**

– it's a good idea to have one box of essential items. This may be the last box you pack in your old home and the first box you open in your new home. Essentials might include tea/coffee, a kettle and a couple of mugs so that you can have a drink when you get to your new home. It may also include some food, any important documents that you may need, soap or washing up liquid, a change of clothes or anything else you don't want to be searching for amongst all your other boxes when you first move in.

**Use luggage** – if you have luggage you might like to use this to pack your clothes in. If you do decide to use any luggage remember not to overfill it in case the zips break.

You shouldn't use plastic bags as they can rip and if you place anything delicate in them the removal company won't be held responsible if they break during the move.

**Disconnect electronic items** – when you have disconnected any of your electronic items such as your television and stereo it's a good idea to label the wires so you know what they're for and keep them in a box together so it's easy to connect up your devices again once you've moved.

**Taking apart furniture** – if you've got wardrobes, desks, or beds etc. that need to be taken apart before you move you should clearly label each part and where it goes to make it easier to put them back together again. You should also keep any screws and bolts from each item separate so you know what goes where.

### ● Other things to consider before you move

You'll need to arrange for your washing machine and oven to be disconnected. This should be done by a professional, especially in the case of gas ovens. If you're moving as a management transfer or downsizing as a beneficial transfer, we will arrange this for you. Details about moving as a beneficial transfer can be found here: [www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/finding-more-suitable-home/help-move-smaller-home](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/finding-more-suitable-home/help-move-smaller-home).

If you have a dishwasher, this will need to be disconnected as well. Regardless of what type of move you're doing you'll need to arrange for this to be done yourself before you move.

**A note about washing machines** – when your washing machine was delivered it would've had transit brackets in the back of the

machine. Transit brackets are like a type of bolt that hold the washing machine drum in place whilst it's being moved. Often, they're still in the back of the machine and can be re-tightened before the washing machine is moved.

If you don't have the original transit brackets you can buy them online or from a plumbing merchant. If you don't refit the transit brackets before the machine is moved the removal company won't be held responsible for any damage to the machine during the move.

You should also remember to remove the transit brackets once the washing machine is in your new home. Failure to do so can irreparably damage your machine.

Information about transit brackets can be found online here: [www.ukwhitegoods.co.uk/help/buying-advice/installation-advice/3616-washing-machine-transit-bolts](http://www.ukwhitegoods.co.uk/help/buying-advice/installation-advice/3616-washing-machine-transit-bolts).

### ● Fridge/freezer

You should defrost your fridge/freezer the day before the move and remove all items of food. You should place a towel at the bottom of the machine to soak up the water as it defrosts.





## ● Pets

Moving can be traumatic for pets, even more so than for owners. If you have a cat or a dog it may be wise to take them to your new property in the morning before the move takes place and shutting them safely in a room with food, water and some familiar toys or bedding. Of course, you shouldn't leave them unattended for very long.

If you have a dog, you may also consider asking a friend or family member to take care of them whilst the move is taking place. That way you can collect them later and take them to your new home.

If you are concerned about how your pet may react to the move, there is further advice on-line. Good places to start would be Cats Protection or the Dogs Trust

[www.cats.org.uk/moving-house](http://www.cats.org.uk/moving-house).

[www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/factsheets-downloads/factsheetmovinghousenov13.pdf](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/factsheets-downloads/factsheetmovinghousenov13.pdf).



## ● Moving day

It's important to be ready for the removal company on the day of the move. They usually arrive early so that they can get the move completed in good time. If you haven't packed up your home as agreed they may refuse to move you.

It's okay if you have a small amount of last minute packing to do. This might include your essentials box and the bedding that you've used the previous night.

The removal company won't expect you to physically load any items or boxes, but it's important that you're there to answer any questions they have.



## ● Before you leave your old home

**Take meter readings** – you should take readings of your gas and electric meters so you can give them to your energy suppliers and settle your final accounts. If you have a water meter you should take a reading of this as well.



If you don't take your meter readings and report these to your utilities company, there is always the risk that you will end up paying for the electric and gas used by the new people moving into your home.

**Turn off the power** – it's wise to turn the power off directly at the fuse box. That way you can be sure that no lights are left on and you won't be charged for any extra electricity after you've moved.



**Have a good look around** – make sure you haven't left anything behind. It's easy to forget things such as mirrors and wall clocks because you're so used to seeing them you don't notice them any more.

## ● Before you hand back your keys

It's hard to remove carpets and flooring before your possessions have been moved. It's a good idea to factor in some time after the move to do this. However, you can take down curtains and blinds on the morning of the move or before.

You should also clean your old property before you hand back the keys. You can do this before the move takes place, but if this is difficult you can do it after the move when surfaces are clear.

If your home is not left clean and tidy the council may charge you for additional cleaning or removal of rubbish after you've moved.







## ● If you're moving through mutual exchange

If you're exchanging with someone you'll need to arrange with them how the move will work. You should arrange to move on the same day so that you don't arrive at your new address before the other person's belongings have been cleared.

It's possible for you to arrange to use the same removal company so that once your belongings are delivered they are unloaded and your exchange partner's possessions are loaded on to the same van. However, this can cause confusion and it would be easy for the removal company to mix your boxes up with the other person's. If you decide to do this, you should work out how you will keep your belongings separate.

Remember, removals shouldn't take place until you have formally exchanged tenancies.



## ● Letting people know you've moved

Hopefully you'll want to tell your friends and family that you have moved home, but you should also inform various companies that you've changed address. It's a good idea to pay for your post to be redirected for three or six months after you move in case there's anyone you've forgotten to tell.

You can arrange to have your post redirected online here: [www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection](http://www.royalmail.com/personal/receiving-mail/redirection) or you can do this at your local post office. If you are downsizing as a beneficial transfer, we will reimburse you for the cost of this for three months – just show us your receipt.

See below for a list of some of the companies that you should inform of your new address.

There may be other companies you should inform as well as those listed. It might help to check through your last month of post for companies to contact.

### ● List of companies to contact

(This is not an exhaustive list) See also:

[www.money.co.uk/guides/moving-house-change-of-address-checklist.htm](http://www.money.co.uk/guides/moving-house-change-of-address-checklist.htm)  
for a more comprehensive list

Company		Tick when completed
Water company:	Meter reading <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gas company:	Meter reading <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electricity company:	Meter reading <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council Tax: <a href="http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/council-tax/tell-us-you-are-moving-inout">www.lbhf.gov.uk/council-tax/tell-us-you-are-moving-inout</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Housing Benefit: <a href="http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/benefits/change-address-or-circumstances-benefits">www.lbhf.gov.uk/benefits/change-address-or-circumstances-benefits</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Electoral roll: <a href="http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/voting-and-registration/how-do-i-change-my-address-on-the-electoral-register">www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/voting-and-registration/how-do-i-change-my-address-on-the-electoral-register</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Work & Pensions: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/report-benefits-change-circumstances">www.gov.uk/report-benefits-change-circumstances</a>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Post Office: – Redirection of post		<input type="checkbox"/>



<b>Company</b>	<b>Tick when completed</b>
DVLA: <a href="http://www.gov.uk/dvla-change-address">www.gov.uk/dvla-change-address</a> <input type="checkbox"/> Change of address <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle registration <input type="checkbox"/> Driving Licence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Car Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home / Pet Insurance etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet / TV / Telephone provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bank	<input type="checkbox"/>
Credit card providers (if any)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile phone company	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online shops you use	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Others</b> (add as needed)	
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
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## Useful Links

### About downsizing with the council:

- [www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/help-move-smaller-home](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/help-move-smaller-home)

### About mutual exchange:

- [www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/exchanging-your-home](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/housing/council-tenants/exchanging-your-home)

### About moving:

- [www.moneysavingexpert.com/mortgages/moving-house-checklist](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/mortgages/moving-house-checklist)
- [www.moveme.com/moving-guide](http://www.moveme.com/moving-guide)
- [www.primelocation.com/discover/moving-home/moving-checklist/#UwuQEooak0PVlt1u.97](http://www.primelocation.com/discover/moving-home/moving-checklist/#UwuQEooak0PVlt1u.97)

### About disposing of unwanted items:

- <https://groups.freecycle.org/group/HammersmithandFulhamUK/posts/all>
- [www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/repurpose/Pages/rp-shop-white-city](http://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/repurpose/Pages/rp-shop-white-city) (White City only)

- [www.gumtree.com](http://www.gumtree.com)
- [www.bhf.org.uk/shop/donating-goods/book-a-free-furniture-collection](http://www.bhf.org.uk/shop/donating-goods/book-a-free-furniture-collection) - book a free furniture collection
- [www.charitychoice.co.uk/give-your-goods](http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/give-your-goods) - donate your unwanted goods
- [www.freetocollect.co.uk/](http://www.freetocollect.co.uk/) - the ecological alternative
- [www.lbhf.gov.uk/bulkywaste](http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/bulkywaste) - Book a bulky waste collection with Cleaner Greener, email [cleaner.greener@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:cleaner.greener@lbhf.gov.uk) or call 0208 753 1100
- [www.snaffleup.co.uk](http://www.snaffleup.co.uk)
- [www.sueryder.org/shop-with-us/donate-to-our-shops/furniture](http://www.sueryder.org/shop-with-us/donate-to-our-shops/furniture) - free collection
- [www.sbhg.co.uk/furnish-shops](http://www.sbhg.co.uk/furnish-shops)

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