

Transfers and Mutual Exchanges

Transfer Payment Scheme

- By taking part in a mutual exchange and freeing up a larger house you could be eligible for payment under the Transfer Payment Scheme.
- The purpose of this scheme is to encourage tenants who are under-occupying their accommodation to move to more suitable accommodation. The transfer payment scheme operated by the Council provides a flat rate payment of £700 to assist with the expenses incurred in transferring to alternative accommodation.
- Payment under this scheme is subject to the following conditions:
 1. You must be a tenant of the council
 2. You must be currently living in Lerwick, Scalloway, Bressay, Cunningsburgh or Tingwall
 3. You must have an active transfer application to move to smaller accommodation
 4. You must have a clear rent account and no other outstanding debt to the Council
 5. On transfer or exchange from your present accommodation, you would be releasing at least one bedroom, e.g. transfer from a three bedroom property to a two bedroom property.
- The tenant will be paid once the tenancy agreement for the new property has been signed. We reserve the right to take action to recover the payment in the event that the exchange does not take place. Tenants of the Council who undertake mutual exchanges will be entitled to this payment where the conditions laid out as above are fulfilled.

Mutual Exchanges

- Any Council tenant can apply for a transfer or to join a Mutual Exchange scheme. Most transfers and mutual exchanges take place within Shetland although there are also opportunities (but a lot fewer of them) for Council tenants to swap houses for other public sector houses in other parts of the UK.
- Applications for Council house transfers within Shetland are made to SIC Housing and assessed and pointed in accordance with the [Council's Allocation Policy and Points System](#).
- Tenants swapping homes through the mutual exchange scheme [HomeSwapper](#) may be eligible for a Transfer Payment of £700 (see above). The Mutual Exchange scheme is designed to help tenants who want to move within Shetland and who are tenants of the Shetland Islands Council or Hjaltland Housing Association. If two tenants agree that they would like to swap houses, each must request this in writing and not move until SIC Housing and their own landlord has given its written consent for this to go ahead.

See the [Mutual Exchange HomeSwapper Leaflet](#) further details. It can be downloaded from the relevant documents links on the bottom right menu of this page.

HomeSwapper

- SIC and Hjalmland Housing Association are partnered with HomeSwapper. Therefore the service is free to all SIC and Hjalmland tenants for mutual exchanges between public sector tenants across the UK.
- The service is web-based and easy to use. An applicant registers with the [HomeSwapper website](#) and can choose up to 9 areas. The applicant will be matched to new homes that meet the criteria of what and where they want to move, as these are added to the website. These matches are placed in 'My Matches', a page on the website that can only be seen if you log in. An applicant can be prompted about new matches by email or text message. HomeSwapper may produce a printed list of people who want to move within or into Shetland (from all over Britain). The details may be distributed and displayed in housing offices across Britain. Please note that Hjalmland do not currently order lists so this is not available to tenants.
- Once two tenants from different parts of the UK agree they would like to swap houses, the mutual exchange can go ahead - subject to the formal approval required of each tenant's landlord.

Any tenant who does not have access to a computer can use the [public access computers](#) at the Council Housing Office at Shetland Islands Council - Housing Service, Department of Education and Social Care, 6 North Ness Business Park, Lerwick, at Hjalmland Housing Association, at Harbour Street or at the Shetland Tenants Forum at 1a Water Lane, Lerwick.



**Shetland Islands
Council**



This leaflet is a reproduction of the **Housing Options Guide – Council Housing (Housing Options for Existing Tenants – Transfers and Mutual Exchanges)** section.

If you would like this information produced in any other format, please telephone 01595 744360 or email housing@shetland.gov.uk.

Useful Links

Housing Allocation Policy
www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/policyandprocedures/operationalprocedures.asp#AllocationPolicy