

Mutual Exchange



Introduction to Mutual Exchange

Gentoo is all about flexibility and enabling our tenants to find the perfect home for their lifestyle needs. Our Mutual Exchange service enables tenants to advertise their Gentoo home and exchange with other tenants.

In addition, you can access the national 'Home Swap Direct' scheme where you can search for potential exchanges with tenants of other Registered Social Landlords or Local Authorities across the UK.

Swapping your home can be a quicker way of moving than waiting for a transfer through our housing register. Gentoo's online Mutual Exchange system provides an easy way for you to advertise your property and see what other Gentoo properties are available for a swap.



How do I register?

Step 1 - Complete an application form

Firstly, you need to complete an application form and return it to your local office or apply online at <http://mutualexchange.gentoogroup.com>

Step 2 - Verification

Once your application form has been received, it will be forwarded to your local office for verification. Once approved, your home will be advertised online for others to view.

Step 3 - Reference number and pin

You will then be sent a unique reference number and pin (main applicant's date of birth) which will allow you to view the full details of all advertised properties. You will need to keep a note of this reference number to gain future access to the system.

Step 4 - Search and exchange

You can then search the exchange register at <http://mutualexchange.gentoogroup.com>

Important

When you find an exchange, both parties need to get permission from Gentoo to swap homes.

Frequently asked questions

Can anyone apply for the scheme?

You don't have to be on our housing register to register for this service, as long as you are a Gentoo assured tenant.

I'd like to apply. What information do I need to provide?

In your application you will need to provide details of your current home including:

- The area
- Street name
- Type of property
- Number of bedrooms
- Preferred contact details

Please be assured that your personal details will not be advertised online.

How does Mutual Exchange work?

If you see a property that you would like to exchange with, you can express an interest in it and your contact and property details will be sent to the current occupier.

If they are interested in your home, it is their responsibility to contact you. Likewise, other tenants can express an interest in your home.

You and the exchanging tenants should then arrange to view each other's homes. If you would like to proceed with the exchange please contact your local office for approval.

Important

You must not proceed with any removal arrangements until you have received consent from Gentoo and have completed all relevant documentation.

Your home could be at risk if you move without seeking permission.

Can I add photos of my home to the website?

Yes, you can and we encourage tenants to do so.

You can simply upload photos in JPEG format directly to your account.

Please note that all photos must be approved by Gentoo before appearing on your advert.

What if my circumstances change – can I update my application?

Yes, you can update your details online at any time. All you need to do is log on using your reference number and 'edit' your current details page.

Your details will be verified by Gentoo before appearing on the website. Alternatively, you can visit your local office where staff can make the amendments for you.

What if I no longer want to advertise my home for exchange?

You can remove your property from the website at any time, simply log onto the site with your reference number and use the 'withdraw advert' option to remove your home.

Your property will be deleted from the website immediately and from the lists of those applicants who have expressed an interest in it.

Alternatively, contact your local office to remove your application.

What if I don't have access to the internet?

You can contact your local office at anytime for details of available exchange properties and to enquire if anyone has expressed an interest in your property.

Can an exchange be refused?

Yes. Gentoo can refuse to grant permission for the exchange if, for example:

- You have court or possession orders over your tenancy
- You do not hold an assured tenancy
- The home you want to exchange with is too large or too small
- Your home has been specially designed for someone who is disabled and is substantially different from other homes

What else should I consider?

Moving home is a big step. If you move and are unhappy, you may not be able to move again for some time.

Things to think about:

- The condition of your new home – we may not carry out some repairs or alterations after you have moved
- The size of the property
- The rent
- The running costs of the home, such as gas, electricity and water charges
- The size of the garden, if applicable
- How your furniture will fit
- Local facilities, such as shops and schools
- Bus routes

Important

If you agree to exchange homes with another tenant, any current housing application will be cancelled.

What is Home Swap Direct?

Home Swap Direct is the Government's national exchange scheme which makes it easier for people living in a Local Authority or Registered Social Landlord property to find a new property across the UK. Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords registered with Home Swap Direct have agreed to receive requests from each other and search their database for potential mutual exchange matches. This means that tenants

can see available properties for exchange across the whole of the UK, not just those on the Gentoo Mutual Exchange website.

To access the Home Swap Direct system visit

<http://mutualexchange.gentoogroup.com>

Alternatively, for further information contact your Neighbourhood Coordinator.



Top tips

The following tips could help you find an exchange:

1 - Property description

Add a brief description of your property including any useful information or any attractive features. For example;

Property type

- One double bedroom apartment
- On ground floor
- Self-contained

Facilities

- New kitchen/bathroom
- Recently decorated
- Large garden
- Pets allowed

Local amenities

- Nearby parking available
- Opposite local park
- Near shops and library
- Near many bus routes
- Near school

Reason for move

- My family has grown and I need a larger property

2 - Photos

Consider adding external and internal photographs of your property promoting any attractive features. For example; a new kitchen/ bathroom.

Example photographs:

Poor photograph



Good photograph



3 - Provide a description of the type of property you are looking for

Try to be flexible in your choices of area. Consider what are your 'must haves', your 'would likes' and what you could compromise on?

Example:

"I am looking for a two bedroom house, apartment, or maisonette with a garden in the Washington area, ideally within walking distance of The Galleries".

4 - Searching for properties

Be active in looking for exchanges, remember new people join every day.

If you find a property that interests you - check that your property matches the other tenant's requests.

Email the tenant of the property that you are interested in.

Review your advert every three months, and use these tips to update your advert if no one contacts you.

By making your home's advert stand out and appeal to others, you will have a greater chance of finding a successful match.



If you or someone you know would like this information in large print, on CD or in Braille then please contact your local office.

If you or someone you know would like this information in another language, then please contact your local office. Interpretation services are available.

যদি আপনি বা আপনার জানা-শোনা কেউ এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন। দোভাষী পরিষেবা পাওয়া যাচ্ছে।
(Bengali)

如果您或您認識的人希望此信息是其它語言，請與我們聯繫。口譯服務可提供。(Cantonese)

اگر شما و یا شخص دیگری که شما میشناسید مایل هستید این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری دریافت نمائید، لطفاً با ما تماس حاصل کنید. خدمات ترجمه موجود می باشد. (Farsi)

如果您或您认识的人想要本信息以另外一种语言版本提供，那么就请与我们联系。我们同时还提供口译类服务。(Mandarin)

Jeśli Państwo, lub jakaś osoba, którą Państwo znają, chcieliby otrzymać te informacje w innym języku, proszę się z nami skontaktować. Dostępne są także usługi tłumacza ustnego. (Polish)

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