

Housing Options



Introduction

This leaflet contains information about the support and choices available if you want to move home.

Herts Choice Homes

Thrive Homes is a part of Herts Choice Homes, a choice based lettings (CBL) scheme for council and housing association residents across five councils in Hertfordshire. We work with Three Rivers District Council, Watford Borough Council, Hertsmere Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

You 'bid' for properties in the areas you are interested in. This also makes the allocating of social housing properties simpler and more transparent.

How does it work?

If you would like to live in the Three Rivers District or would like to move from one Thrive Homes property to another, you need to apply through www.hertschoicetohomes.org.uk or contact Three Rivers District Council to complete a Housing Needs registration form. You will be asked for information about your current circumstances and housing situation. If you wish to live in another area you will need to contact the relevant Local Authority.

Once this is done you will be given a banding from A to E based on your housing need. You will be given a unique bidding number. You will then be able to start bidding. You can bid in a number of different ways:

- via the Herts Choice Homes website
- by telephone
- by text message
- by postal coupon
- in person at our South Oxhey office.



There is a 'bidding cycle' every week, which runs from 9am on Friday to Tuesday of the following week, closing at 12 noon. When the bidding cycle closes, an offer will be made to the applicant at the top of the list, provided they pass our verification checks. Our checks include:

- no money owed to Thrive Homes
- no previous tenancy issues
- eligibility for property based on household size, age etc.

If you are not a Thrive Homes tenant already and you are currently renting from another social landlord, we will contact your landlord for a reference.

Once all checks are completed we will give you the opportunity to view the prospective new home. If you would like the property then you will be asked to sign the tenancy agreement. If you do not want the property, you will still be able to bid for other properties in the future.



For more information

Thrive Homes 0800 917 6077 or 020 8428 4428
Housing Options team 01923 693873
Three Rivers District Council 01923 776611
www.hertschoicehomes.org.uk

Mutual exchange

Thrive Homes tenants who have an assured tenancy can exchange their home with another tenant who has a secure or assured tenancy either with us or another social landlord via a mutual exchange. It is often the quickest way of moving home. This scheme is ideal if you are looking to move into a new area or you are a low priority on the housing register. Please refer to our mutual exchange leaflet for more details. If you have a fixed term tenancy you can move via mutual exchange, however we advise you to contact the Housing Options team for further advice before you go ahead.

Homeswapper is the UK's largest list of people wanting a mutual exchange, giving you millions of potential swaps.

As a Thrive Homes tenant you can get free access to this service. Just log on to **www.homeswapper.co.uk** and fill out the application form, making sure you add "Thrive Homes" into the landlord box. Once we have verified you as our tenant you will be able to search free of charge. If you do not have access to the internet then you can contact us on 0800 917 6077 and our Housing Options team will complete your application and actively seek an exchange for you.

We will be happy when you find a suitable match, to proceed if:

- the new property is a suitable size for you (note: we also allow exchanges into properties that are one size bigger than your housing need)
- your property has no adaptations specifically suited for you and the new tenant will have no need for them.
- there is no legal action being taken against you

We will make a decision on all mutual exchange requests within 6 weeks. However we will defer the exchange if:

- you have rent arrears on your account

- you have former tenant arrears, from a previous tenancy
- our inspection shows outstanding repairs or unauthorised tenant improvements
- there are any outstanding tenancy issues, such as an interest in another property (through tenancy or ownership) or joint tenancy status.

Once these have been rectified, the exchange may go ahead. If we agree to your exchange and you confirm you still wish to proceed, we will ensure there are current gas and electrical test certificates for your home. ***It is important to remember that you are responsible for and accept the exchanged property as you see it. Your tenancy and rent may also alter after mutual exchange. Please check before you agree to a swap.***

We would be happy to help you through the process of mutual exchange.

Who to contact for more information

Thrive Homes	0800 917 6077 or 020 8428 4428
Housing Options team	01923 693873
Home Swapper	www.homeswapper.co.uk



Downsizing

If you are currently in a home that is too large for your need and wish to downsize to a smaller Thrive Homes property you may be eligible for an incentive to move reward.

Incentives offered can be either:

- a cash payment of £1500 for every bedroom you give up
- part cash payment and assistance
- assistance.

Examples of assistance can include:

- removals including packaging
- replacement flooring
- disconnection and reconnection of kitchen appliances
- payment of transfer of telephone lines
- disposal of unwanted furniture
- redirection of mail.

We will discuss your needs with you and tailor the package accordingly.

For more information

Thrive Homes

0800 917 6077 or 020 8428 4428

Housing Options team

01923 693873



Buying your home from Thrive Homes

You may be able to purchase your home if you:

- were a tenant of Three Rivers District Council and your home was transferred to Thrive Homes

or:

- if you are a Thrive Homes tenant and hold an assured tenancy.

For more information

Thrive Homes 800 917 6077 or 020 8428 4428

email: homeownership@thrivehomes.org.uk

At threat of homelessness?

If you or any family members are threatened with becoming homeless, the Housing Needs team at Three Rivers District Council can provide advice and support.

For more information

Three Rivers District Council

01923 776611

Thrive Homes information is available in **large print**, on our website and spoken word translation. Please contact us free on 0800 917 6077 to discuss how we can help you. We want to ensure our services are fair, and accessible. If you know anyone who may need this type of help and support please tell us.

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