

TRANSFERS AND HOME SWAPS



Our approach to supporting tenants who want to move home

If you want to transfer to another Octavia property, we will do what we can to help. It is important to understand that because there is such a shortage of homes in London, it can sometimes take years to be offered a transfer, particularly if you want a larger property.

For the best chance of a move, you should find out about all of your housing options. As well as a transfer, you could consider a home swap or buying a home. It will also help to be flexible about the type of property and area you want to move to.

What we mean by transfers and home swaps

Transfers

We have a transfer list for tenants who want to transfer to another Octavia property. To be accepted onto our transfer list, you need to be a permanent tenant with an assured or secure tenancy.

You will need to complete a transfer application form, which can be found on our website or you can ask our customer services team to send you one. If you feel you have a medical need to move, we will also ask you to complete a health and disability form and to send us a copy of any medical correspondence from your health provider. We send these to our independent medical advisor, who will assess whether you meet our criteria.



Home swaps

You have the right to swap your home with the tenant of any housing association or council in the country. This is often called a 'mutual exchange'. You can advertise your home and find out about homes available for mutual exchange by:

- ▶ registering on www.homeswapper.co.uk and www.locata.org.uk
- ▶ checking local papers and shop windows for people advertising for an exchange.

When you have found someone to swap with, you will need to get written permission from both landlords. Landlords are not allowed to refuse permission without having a good reason. Reasons may include if either party have rent arrears or if the property is not a suitable size for your family.

If you are planning a home swap, you need to check your exchange partner's tenancy agreement, because you will be taking on that agreement. The new agreement may give you different rights and responsibilities. Please ask our customer services team or get legal advice if there is anything you are unsure about.

What you can expect from our service

We place everyone on our transfer list into a 'priority band' based on their household circumstances and reason for moving. Once we have assessed your application, we will contact you to tell you which priority band you are in. Within each band, we prioritise applicants by how long they have been waiting.

If you disagree with our assessment of your transfer application, you can ask our customer service and rehousing manager to review your case. They will reply to you within ten working days.

Incentives for moving somewhere smaller

If your home is too big for you, we may be able to offer you a financial incentive to transfer to a smaller property. Your home will need to have a good layout and room sizes, and be easy for us to let to an overcrowded family on our transfer list. Even if we cannot offer you an financial incentive, you will be given a high priority on our transfer list.

Compensation if we require you to move

If you are moving because we are demolishing or carrying out major improvements to your home, you may be entitled to compensation. Please see our compensation and other payments factsheet or talk to your neighbourhood officer for more information.

What will happen once you are on our transfer list

We will send you details of how to use our home allocation website www.locata.org.uk where you can see the properties that are available and choose whether to place a bid. When bidding closes on a property, we look at all of the bids we received and we offer the property to the person in the highest priority band who has waited the longest.

If you owe more than 4 weeks rent on your account, we cannot invite you to view a property. If you are offered a property, any outstanding money must be paid on your account before the new tenancy will be given.

We will write to you each year to check that you still want a transfer. If you do not reply to our letter, we will take you off the list. You must also contact us if your household circumstances change.



How to contact us about moving home

For more information or to request a transfer form please visit our website octaviahousing.org.uk or contact our lettings team on the number below.

Please contact us if you need any part of this information in Braille, on audio tape or explained in a different language.

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