



Mohammed and Khusnara have moved to a new home with their growing family.

## A good choice for Mohammed and Khusnara

**Mohammed Miah and Khusnara Begum are enjoying living in a four-bedroomed house after successfully getting a move through homeseekers in Tower Hamlets – one of our choice-based lettings partners.**

Mohammed and Khusnara, who have six children, had been terribly overcrowded in their former home and we also needed them to move so that we could carry out major repairs.

Homeseekers is one of several choice-based lettings schemes we have joined over the past few years. The schemes are mostly led by local councils and include housing associations.

Choice-based lettings schemes are favoured by the government, because they give people more choice about where they move to. Instead of staff deciding which homes to offer to which people, they are advertised, so that people who are registered can bid for them.

Studies show that when tenants can choose their own home, they stay longer. There is also evidence that homes are being shared more fairly.

However, choice-based lettings schemes don't make more homes available. You still need an urgent need to move to get a transfer – especially if you need a home with three or more bedrooms. That's why we recommend that you consider your other options as well.

If we belong to a choice-based lettings scheme in your area, to get a transfer you must register

with the scheme, either on their website or by calling the council. When you register, you will be sent your priority or points level, together with information about how the bidding system works.

You can still register on one of our other transfer lists if you would like to move somewhere else.

Don't forget that under choice-based lettings, you have to play a much more active role if you want to move. Put simply, if you don't bid, you won't be offered a property.

To stand the best chance, you need to keep looking and check any feedback given on who has been successful. This can help you see if there are ways to improve your chances – for example, by bidding in less popular areas.

For more information, call the Service Centre and ask to speak to the lettings team.

### Our choice-based lettings partners

Southern Housing Group is a partner in no less than 39 choice-based lettings schemes serving, between them, 70 of the local authority areas where we have homes. We advertise our own empty homes in these schemes.

For a full list of these choice-based lettings schemes, and contact details, phone the Service Centre on 0300 303 1771 and choose Option 3.

Spring 2010

A supplement  
to **opendoor**  
residents'  
newsletter



It was a mad day! We found the development online, contacted the sales and lettings team, viewed the property and applied for it all in one day!



## Intermediate market rent homes



Daniel Gibson and Carly Brett at home in Ryde.

# A home for three in Ryde

**Daniel Gibson, Carly Brett and their young son Oscar have a new home in Ryde on the Isle of Wight, thanks to our intermediate rent scheme.**

The couple had been living in East Grinstead in West Sussex, where Daniel was working as a Senior Support Worker and Carly was combining student life with taking care of Oscar. However, they were keen to move to the Isle of Wight to be closer to Carly's family.

The main drawback was housing, as Daniel explains: "I had a job arranged for me on the island doing what I was already doing. The trouble was trying to find somewhere to live! We couldn't afford to raise a deposit to buy a property and we were really uncertain about using unfamiliar letting agents."

As someone who is partially blind, Daniel also needed a home with lots of natural light. "This was really important for us when looking for a

new home. But these sorts of properties are usually few and far between," he says.

While searching on the internet on a visit to Carly's relatives, the couple came up with our intermediate market rent scheme, which offers homes at 20 per cent less than charged by private landlords. Even better, our Oak Vale scheme in Ryde was just round the corner from where they were staying.

"It was a mad day!" says Daniel. "We found the development online, contacted the sales and lettings team, viewed the property and applied for it all in one day!"

Daniel and Carly are delighted with their flat and say it is perfect for Daniel, as it is light and airy, with two large windows in the living room.

With such a reasonable rent, the couple are now planning to save for a deposit on a home of their own.



Reading House



Milward Court

## Rented homes

# Independent living for the over-60s

**Our schemes for retired people provide independent living for those over 60 who want a safe, secure environment.**

If you would like to live near the sea, several of our schemes currently have vacant bedsits or one bedroom flats. They include:

- Reading House on the seafront at Hayling Island, near Havant
- Lakeside Court, which is in the Hampden Park area of Eastbourne

- Beaufort Court in St Leonards-on-Sea, in East Sussex
- Mitchell House in Seaford, East Sussex
- Milward Court in Shoreham-by-Sea.

All our schemes are maintained to a high standard and have beautiful gardens. They provide a 24-hour careline for emergencies, laundry rooms and other shared facilities. For more information, call the Service Centre (select Option 3) on 0300 303 1771.

# Who got a transfer

We report on the residents who got a move via our transfer lists between October 2009 and January 2010.

The tables show that your chances of getting a move in this way depend on the areas you want to move to and your priority level. However, we won't normally consider you for a transfer while you owe us rent. And if you behave in an anti-social way, we won't offer you a transfer for two years.

**Please note:** We do not keep transfer lists in many areas, because we work with other landlords in choice-based lettings schemes. People who got a move in this way are not included in the lists shown below. For more details, call the Service Centre.

## London region

### 19 residents got a transfer

There is currently low demand for two bedroom homes in Hackney.

Band	Moved to		Move reason
	Beds	Area	
A	2	Borough	d
A	1	Chelsea	b
B	2	Chelsea	b
A	3	Clapton	b
D	1	Clapton	h
B	3	East Dulwich	a
D	3	East Dulwich	a
C	2	Fulham	a
C	2	Fulham	a
D	1	Fulham	f
A	6	Hackney	b
AA	3	Islington	i
C	1	Islington	e
C	3	Islington	a
D	2	Islington	b
A	1	Holloway	f
A	1	Holloway	f
B	6	Stamford Hill	a
A	2	Stoke New'ton	j

## South region

### Five residents got a transfer

Band	Moved to		Move reason
	Beds	Area	
C	2	Crawley	a
A	1	Lewes	b
A	1	Lewes	c
A	1	Lewes	c
C	3	Worthing	a

## South Wight HA

### 14 residents got a transfer

We report these transfers differently because the council manages all social housing applications on the Island.

Moved to	Cases	Move reason	Home type	
				Beds
1	1 of W	1	b	Flat
1	1 of W	3	c	Flat
1	1 of W	1	g	Flat
1	1 of W	2	c	Bedsit
2	1 of W	1	x	House
2	1 of W	2	x	Flat
2	1 of W	1	x	Bungalow
3	1 of W	3	a	House

## James Butcher HA

### 25 residents got a transfer

Band	Moved to		Move reason
	Beds	Area	
B	1	Bracknell	b
B	1	Bracknell	b
B	1	Bracknell	b
C	1	Bracknell	a
C	Bedsit	Calcot	c
C	Bedsit	Calcot	x
B	2	Caversham	a
C	2	Earley	b
B	1	Englefield Grn	b
B	1	Englefield Grn	b
AA	1	Reading	f
AA	1	Reading	f
AA	1	Reading	f
AA	1	Reading	f
AA	1	Reading	f
AA	1	Reading	f
B	1	Reading	b
D	1	Reading	x
B	Bedsit	Swindon	b
C	1	Swindon	b
D	1	Swindon	x
C	Bedsit	Theale	c
AA	1	Woodley	f
AA	1	Woodley	f
AA	1	Woodley	f

## Thames Gateway region

### Five residents got a transfer

Band	Moved to		Move reason
	Beds	Area	
A	1	Newham	b
C	1	Newham	b
D	2	Newham	x
A	1	Thurrock	b
B	2	Thurrock	b

# Swapping homes

**If you have an assured or secure tenancy, don't forget that you can swap your home ('make a mutual exchange') with the tenant of another public landlord.**

You must get written permission from both landlords, but we will not refuse without good reason.

To find a swap partner, you can:

- register for free with HomeSwapper,

the online national scheme at [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

- go to your council to register on their mutual exchange list
- advertise locally in shop windows
- if your home is disabled adapted and you need a similar swap, register with Disabled Data Link at <http://web.ukonline.co.uk/ddlg.uk/index.htm>

## Key

- a Overcrowded
- b Medical needs/disability
- c Move to sheltered scheme
- d Urgent need to change address
- e Move to give/get family support
- f Home being demolished/improved
- g Under-occupying
- h Moving from hostel
- i Anti-social behaviour
- j Home in poor condition
- x Other

# Low-cost home ownership

Southern Housing Group develops homes for low-cost home ownership.



The schemes listed below are New Build HomeBuy (shared ownership) schemes. Most schemes prioritise people who live or work in the local area.

**Hackney Latham's Yard:** 1 bed flats, 35% share from £57,750.

**Woolwich Royal Arsenal, Base 18:** 1 & 2 bed flats, 30% share from £57,000. **Royal Arsenal, The Armouries:** 1 & 2 bed flats, 25% share from £43,750.

**Bracknell Canterville Place:** 1 & 2 bed flats, 45% share from £56,250.

Pictured is The Armouries scheme at Royal Arsenal in Woolwich.

# Homefocus magazine

Looking to buy a home of your own? Are inflated house prices holding you back? homefocus magazine can point you in the right direction – and it's free!

Inside homefocus, you'll find lots of information about affordable housing schemes, a selection of what's currently on the market and details about what's coming soon – alongside all the practical, legal and financial advice you should ask for when buying your very own affordable home.

To get your hands on a free copy of homefocus, text SHGHOMEFOCUS, followed by your name and full address, to 81025. (Texts cost 25p. Normal network charges will apply.)



## What we mean by:

**New Build HomeBuy** (shared ownership) allows you to part-buy, part-rent a brand-new home. You need a mortgage to buy your share and you pay a subsidised rent on the rest, as well as service charges.

**Intermediate market rent** allows you to rent a home developed by a housing association, paying a rent that is typically 20% lower than for similar homes for private rent in the area. To apply, you must be working full time, but have a joint income of less than £60,000. Some people use the scheme to help them save towards buying a shared ownership home.

**Key workers** are public workers such as nurses, teachers, police and prison officers. Some schemes (though fewer than in the past) are aimed at these people.

You can find out about other schemes available for low-cost home ownership or rent by logging on to [www.homebuy.co.uk](http://www.homebuy.co.uk)

# Intermediate market rent

Southern Housing Group also develops homes for intermediate market rent (see opposite).

The schemes listed are all available to key workers and non-key workers. Priority is given to people with a local connection.

**Woolwich Royal Arsenal, The Armouries:** 1 & 2 bed flats from £622 pcm.

**Dagenham Church Elm Court:** 1 & 2 bed flats from April 2010 from £480 pcm.

**Ramsgate, Kent Manston Gardens:** 1 & 2 bed flats from £399 pcm.

**Ventnor, Isle of Wight Lawson Coach House:** 2 bed flats from £380 pcm.



## More information

For details about your options or our schemes email [sales@shgroup.org.uk](mailto:sales@shgroup.org.uk), phone 08456 12 12 71 or log on to [www.shgroup.org.uk](http://www.shgroup.org.uk)