

Downsizing Scheme

What is the Downsizing Scheme?

The Downsizing Scheme was introduced to offer help and financial support to those living in homes that are too large for them, enabling them to move to a smaller property to increase the number of larger homes available for families that are overcrowded.

Do I qualify?

You must hold an Assured or 5 Year Fixed Term tenancy with Swan; live in a 2 bedroom property or larger; and want to move to a 1 or 2 bedroom property.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you have a least one spare bedroom?
- Do you struggle to pay your utility bills?
- Could you benefit from lower rent and council tax charges?
- Are you of working age and in receipt of Housing Benefit/Housing Element of Universal Credit?

If you have answered 'Yes' to the first question and at least one other, you may be eligible for a cash payment under our Downsizing Scheme.

Why should I Downsize?

In England it is estimated that 660,000 households have at least one spare bedroom and that more than 400,000 households are overcrowded.

From April 2013 people of working age in receipt of benefits will only receive payment towards their rent based on the number of bedrooms their family needs. This means that households with 1 bedroom more than they need will have to pay 14% of their rent, and households with 2 or more bedrooms than they need will have to pay 25% of their rent.

How much could I receive?

Number of beds in current home	Number of beds in new home	Payment per bedroom	Maximum allowance
4 or more	2	£500	£1000
4 or more	1	£1000	£2000
3	2	£500	£500
3	1	£1000	£2000
2	1	£500	£500

You could receive payment of up to £2000, depending on the size of the property you leave and move in to, in line with the table above. Please note that all downsizing payments are discretionary and can vary depending on your individual circumstances. Any payment made will be less any rent arrears or other charges you may owe to Swan, including the cost of any repairs required to relet the property after you leave (recharges).

What happens next?

You must first register for a transfer online at www.homehunt.co.uk. Your application will be placed into one of 4 priority bands depending on your circumstances. Once registered you will be able to search and apply for your new home via the website.

Downsizing via Mutual Exchange

You can also register at www.homeswapper.co.uk to find someone with a smaller home to swap with. If they are also a Swan tenant, and their home is too small for them, you could receive a payment of £500 for giving up 1 bedroom or £1000 for giving up 2 bedrooms or more.

Contact the Allocations Team on **0300 303 2500**

Email: allocations@swan.org.uk

Swan Housing Group, Pilgrim House, High Street, Billericay, Essex CM12 9XY