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Prime Minister.
AKS
1982



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
2 MARSHAM STREET
LONDON SW1P 3EB
01-212 7601

MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION

19 February 1982

Ian Gow Esq MP
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Mr Gow,

TENANTS' EXCHANGE SCHEME

Mr Stanley mentioned to the Prime Minister this morning that he would be announcing the introduction of this scheme in a press released written answer on Monday. I attach a copy of the press notice, and a copy of a letter and attachments which are also being sent on Monday to all housing authorities, new towns and to the National Federation of Housing Associations.

I am copying this letter to Clive Whitmore, to David Heyhoe in the Lord President's Office, and to John Craig at the Welsh Office.

*Yours sincerely,
Alan Ridzell*

ALAN RIDDELL
Private Secretary



File AH
Housing
re Ian Gow

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

22 February 1982

Dear Riddell,

TENANTS' EXCHANGE SCHEME

Thank you for sending me a copy of your letter of 19 February 1982 to Ian Gow about the Tenants' Exchange Scheme.

The Prime Minister was grateful to Mr Stanley for letting her have the literature which you sent with your letter.

Yours sincerely,

Sheila Wharton.

Alan Riddell Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

Press Notice

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22 February 1982

JOHN STANLEY ANNOUNCES TENANTS EXCHANGE SCHEME

John Stanley, Minister for Housing and Construction, announced to-day that the Government would be launching a computer-based national information scheme for public sector tenants who wished to move by exchanging homes. The scheme will be called the Tenants Exchange Scheme.

In answer to a Parliamentary Question from Ivan Lawrence MP, (Burton), John Stanley said:

"The absence of any nationally available information about the housing requirements of tenants who wish to move by arranging exchanges has been a serious impediment for years to the mobility of public sector tenants. Following consultations with the local authority associations, the government is commissioning a computer bureau to establish a computer-based national information scheme for local authority, new town and housing association tenants who wish to move by exchanging homes. The scheme will be called the Tenants Exchange Scheme and is due to come into operation at the beginning of April. It will be available for use by tenants of local councils, new towns and housing associations throughout England and Wales. A letter giving details of the Tenants Exchange Scheme is being sent to-day to all housing authorities, new towns and development corporations, and to the National Federation of Housing Associations, and I am placing a copy in the Library. I believe that the Tenants Exchange Scheme will prove of great assistance to tenants throughout the country who wish to move by arranging exchanges."

NOTE TO EDITORS

A great many tenants seek to move by making exchanges with the tenants of other authorities. But because of the absence of any computerised central data-bank of information about tenants wanting to exchange, exchanges can involve both tenants and local authorities in much time-consuming effort and administrative work. John Stanley announced last September (Press Notice 350) that he intended to consult the local authority associations on proposals for a scheme to provide a computerised data-bank of information about tenants' exchange requirements to which tenants throughout the country would have access. This scheme, to be called the Tenants Exchange Scheme, will work as follows:

- 1) Tenants wanting to exchange will need to obtain the Tenants Exchange Scheme registration form from their local authority, new town development corporation, citizens' advice bureau or housing advice centres. They will then fill in details of their present accommodation and the area to which they want to move, and post the registration form to the computer bureau who will run the scheme.

- 2) The bureau will send each local authority a monthly list of tenants elsewhere in England and Wales who want to move into that authority's area. Tenants wanting to exchange will simply need to examine the list held by their own authority to see if it contains tenants of other authorities with whom they might be able to exchange.
- 3) Tenants, once they have agreed an exchange between themselves, will need to get the exchange approved by the respective landlords (ie local authority, new town or housing association) as is the case now.
- 4) There will be no charge to tenants using the Tenants Exchange Scheme.

Other measures taken by the Government to further mobility are set out in the booklet "Wanting to Move?" (Copy attached).

Press Inquiries: 01-212 3492/3/4/5/6
Night Calls (6.30 pm - 8.00 am)
Weekends and Holidays: 01-212 7071

Public Inquiries: 01-212 3434; ask for
Public Inquiry Unit



Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street London SW1

Telephone 01-212 3434

To the Chief Executive of each
District Council in England
and the Town Clerk of the City
of London

22 February 1982

Dear Sir

THE TENANTS EXCHANGE SCHEME

You will recall that, nearly a year ago, a significant step forward in improving public sector tenants' mobility was made by the setting up of the National Mobility Scheme. Virtually every authority in England and Wales now participates. The Minister for Housing and Construction is grateful to authorities for the way in which they have responded to this important initiative unanimously agreed by the local authority associations.

The National Mobility Scheme helps those tenants who want to move to get access to vacancies in the stock of other authorities across the country. However, a great many tenants also seek to move by making exchanges with the tenants of other authorities. But because of the absence of any computerised central data bank of information about tenants wanting to exchange, exchanges can involve both tenants and local authorities in much time-consuming effort and administrative work. The Minister therefore announced last September that he intended to consult the local authority associations on proposals to establish a national computer-based information service for tenants who wish to exchange. These consultations have now been completed, and the Minister expects to have the new information service - to be known as the Tenants Exchange Scheme - ready for tenants to register as from 1 April.

I should highlight the following points about the Tenants Exchange Scheme:

1. The costs of the computer bureau who will run the Scheme will be met fully by the Department of the Environment and the Welsh Office.
2. The only action requested of authorities is
 - a) to hand out to any tenants wishing to exchange the combined leaflet and registration form (text attached); and

- b) to make available for inspection the list that the council receives from the computer bureau of the tenants who want to find a tenant to exchange with in the council's area (specimen sheet attached).
3. Any public sector tenant of a local authority, new town or housing association in England and Wales will be able to register his/her exchange requirements and details of present home.
4. It will be made very clear that all exchanges continue to require the approval of the respective landlord.

The Scheme works as follows:

The combined leaflet and registration form is a four page document. One half of it describes how the Scheme works; the other half, which is detachable, constitutes the registration form for sending to the computer bureau. The leaflet will be available from all local housing authorities, new town development corporations, housing associations, housing aid and advice centres, and citizens' advice bureaux.

A tenant wanting to exchange will fill in the registration form and post it to the Tenants Exchange Scheme at a London PO Box number.

The tenant will receive back a letter telling him what details have been registered under his name, and the names of those local authorities and any new town on whose exchange lists his details will appear.

At the end of each month each local authority and new town will be sent an exchange list of the tenants who have registered and want to move to its area. The first lists will be produced three months after the start of the Scheme; ie in July.

Tenants who want to move away from your authority's area will inspect your exchange list so as to identify any tenants in the area they want to move to who want to come to your authority's area.

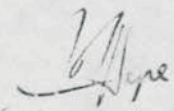
Tenants are entirely responsible for their own arrangements for making contact with possible exchange partners.

The Department will write to you again next month to confirm the exact date that registrations can start to be made under the Scheme planned for 1 April. We will send you 500 copies of the leaflet/registration form and 10 copies of a poster for display in housing departments, public libraries and elsewhere. Any further supplies can be obtained by writing to the

address given for the Scheme in the leaflet. The computer bureau will send the monthly lists to the Chief Officer of your authority's housing department at the address given in List No 15 of the 1982 Municipal Year Book.

I enclose a copy of this letter for your chief housing officer. If you have any queries the Department's Regional Controller for your area will be glad to try to assist.

Yours faithfully


J M HOPE

TENANTS EXCHANGE SCHEME

The Government has introduced this scheme to help public sector tenants in England and Wales who want to exchange homes with a tenant in another council's area.

Are you the tenant of a district or borough council, a new town or a housing association?

Do you want to try to arrange an exchange with a tenant in another area?

If so, the Tenants Exchange Scheme could help you. There is no charge for using the scheme.

This is how the Tenants Exchange Scheme works:

- If you want to use the Scheme fill in the registration form on pages 3 and 4 of this leaflet, following the notes on page 2 very carefully. Then tear off the form and post it to:
Tenants Exchange Scheme
PO Box ...
LONDON SW1P ...
- You will receive back a letter telling you (a) what details have been registered under your name and (b) the names of the local authorities and any new town on whose lists your name and details will appear (see note 14 on page 2)
- At the end of each month each council and each new town will be sent a list of tenants who have registered and want to move into its area. Your name and details will appear on the lists sent to those authorities covering the area to which you want to move. Tenants in those authorities who want to move to where you are now living will inspect the list and will get in touch with you direct if they want to exchange with you. After June 1982 you should go along yourself to your own council or new town and ask to see its Tenants Exchange Scheme list. This will show you all those tenants who want to move to where you are living now, and will enable you to pick out possible tenants with whom to exchange. You can get in touch with them direct.

- Once you have agreed with another tenant that you would like to exchange homes you will both have to get written permission from your respective council, new town or housing association before the exchange can go ahead.

Your registration will be automatically removed from the lists one year after the date of the registration letter is sent to you, unless you ask for it to be removed earlier. If you arrange to move or change your mind about wanting to exchange, please write to the Tenants Exchange Scheme, PO Box ... , London SW1, and ask for your registration to be removed, so that other tenants do not get in touch with you unnecessarily. If you want to continue your registration for another year, you will need to send in a new registration form to arrive by the date stated on the registration letter.

Special Notes

- *Most authorities have conditions which need to be satisfied before they give permission for exchanges. You may wish to find out in advance what conditions are applied by your authority or housing association before you approach tenants elsewhere about a possible exchange.
- *The details of individual dwellings that appear on the lists sent to authorities are as given by the tenants. No guarantees can be given as to their accuracy.

How to complete the registration form

(The number of each note below corresponds to the number against each question on the form).

1. Write your name using block capitals. Give your initials only of your forenames, and your surname, eg MR R J BROWN.
2. Write your full postal address using block capitals. Start a new line on the form for each line of your address. Do not forget to include your postcode.
3. If you have a telephone at home, write the number as it appears on the dial of your telephone eg NEWBOROUGH 851656 or 021-959 8261. If you have to write the name of an exchange use block capitals.
4. Write the name of your local district or borough council using block capitals. If you are a tenant of a new town or a housing association, you should still write in the name of your local council. Do not write in any of the four boxes on the right of this question.
5. If, to the best of your knowledge, your home was built before 1940, tick the 'Pre-war' box. Otherwise tick the 'Post-war' box.
6. You must answer part (a).
 - (a) Tick one box only. If your flat or maisonette is part of a converted house, tick 'flat' or 'maisonette' as appropriate.
 - (b) If you know that your home is available only to people seeking sheltered accommodation or to elderly people tick the box; otherwise leave it blank.
7. You must write in ~~the~~ the box the number, in figures, of bedrooms in your home. Include any rooms which were intended to be bedrooms but which you use for another purpose. Do not include any living rooms which are sometimes used for sleeping. If you live in a bed-sitter write a '0' in the box.

8. If your home has central heating provided by a district heating system or communal boiler shared with other dwellings tick the box 'Communal/district'. If your home has independent central heating from a boiler in your home tick the box in this line according to which type of fuel it uses. Tick only one box in this line.

9. Tick just one of the boxes if you live in a house or a bungalow; otherwise leave blank.

10. If you live in a ground floor flat or maisonette answer part (a) only; if your flat or maisonette is not at ground level you should answer parts (b) and (c).

(a) If the front door to your home (not just the main entrance to your block) is at ground level, or is on a corridor or balcony which leads, without more than a few steps, to ground level, tick box (a); otherwise leave blank.

(b) If you did not tick part (a), write in box (b), in figures, how many floors your front door is above ground level. If you live a basement flat, and your front door is below ground level you should write 'B' in box (b).

(c) If there is a lift in your block which serves your floor tick this box; otherwise leave blank.

11. Tick this box if you have a garden (no matter how small) for the private use of you and your family. But if, for example, you only have the use of communal gardens or open space you should leave this box blank.

12. (a) Tick this box if a garage goes automatically with the tenancy; otherwise leave blank.

(b) Tick this box if, for example, you may park a car in your garden or in a communal parking area or on an estate road which is not open to general traffic; otherwise leave blank and go on to question 13.

13. If you use this space, the number of letters in each word, and the spaces in between them, should not add up to more than 60. Anything beyond this limit will not appear on the printed lists. Write in block capitals. Examples of what you might wish to write are:

(i) NEAR SHOPS AND STATION AND RECENTLY DECORATED

or (ii) ADAPTED FOR DISABLED PERSON WITH OFFSTREET PARKING

14. The way you answer this question will determine to which authorities your details are sent. You have 3 alternatives.

Alternative 1. Do you want your details sent just to the one council to whose area you want to move, and to no other? If so, complete part (c) only if you know the exact name of the council to whose area you want to move. If you do not know its exact name, complete parts (a) and (b).

Alternative 2. Do you want your details sent to the one council to whose area you want to move, but also to those councils that immediately adjoin it? If so, complete as for alternative 1 above, but tick box (d) as well.

Alternative 3. Do you want your details to be sent to all the councils within a particular county to which you want to move? If so, write in part (a) the name of the county. Leave parts (b) and (c) blank.

15. Give the smallest number of bedrooms your new home would need to have. Put '0' if you would be prepared to accept a bed-sitter. NB It is unlikely that an authority will agree to an exchange if, as a result, a house or a flat would become under-occupied.

16. Delete the sentence which does not apply.

17. Where the tenancy of your present home is in the names of more than one person, each person must sign the declaration.

Tenants Exchange Scheme

PAGE 3 OF
DRAFT LEAFLET

Please use block capitals throughout

A - Present Address

- 1 What are your initials and surname? Mr/Mrs/Miss
- 2 What is your address? (include the postcode)

- 3 What is your telephone number? _____
- 4 What is the name of your local authority? _____

do not use
this box

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B - Present Accommodation

- 5 When was your home built? (tick one box only) prewar postwar
- 6 (a) Is it a (tick one box only) flat maisonette house bungalow
- (b) Is it sheltered or elderly persons accommodation? (leave blank if it isn't) (tick if 'Yes')
- 7 How many bedrooms are there? (put a figure)
- 8 If your home has central heating, is it (tick one box only)
communal/district solid fuel electric gas oil
- 9 If you live in a house, is it (tick one box only) terraced end of terrace semi-detached detached
- 10 (a) If you live in a flat or maisonette, does your front door open at ground level? (tick if 'Yes')
- (b) If you have not ticked 10(a), on to which floor does your front door open? (put a figure)
- (c) Is there a lift? (leave blank if 'No') (tick if 'Yes')
- 11 Do you have a garden for your use only? (leave blank if 'No') (tick if 'Yes')
- 12 (a) Is there a garage available? (leave blank if 'No') (tick if 'Yes')
- (b) If you have not ticked 12(a), is there parking for your car off the street? (leave blank if 'No') (tick if 'Yes')
- 13 You may use this space to add a few words about your home or its situation of interest to someone wanting to exchange with you

C - Where do you want to move? (it is essential you read the guidance note on page 2)

- 14 (a) What is the name of the county where you want to move to? _____
- (b) What is the name of the town where you want to move to? _____
- (c) What is the name of the local district, or borough council, or new town where you want to move to? _____
- (d) Would you consider moving to neighbouring council areas? (leave blank if 'No') (tick if 'Yes')
- 15 What is the minimum number of bedrooms you would accept? (put a figure)

do not use
this box

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Please
turn over

D - Declaration
(* delete whichever alternative does not apply)

16 *I declare that I am the sole tenant at the address given in item 2 above.
We declare that we are the joint tenants at the address given in item 2
above.

17 I/we understand that all the details in this form will be publicly
displayed and I/we give my/our authority for this to be done.

Signed..... Date.....

Tenants Exchange Scheme - Specimen extract from an authority's monthly list of details of tenants who want to move to,
or near to, its area.

Current area	Name, address and telephone number	Type of accommodation	Sheltered accommodation	Position	Floor	Lift	Bedrooms	Central Heating	Garden	Parking	Age of property	
NW England												
Lancashire												
Preston	Mr J Adams 23 Long Street Wilwood Lancashire	House	-	Semi-detached	-	-	3	Electric	Yes	Garage	Post-war	
	PRESTON 999657	GARAGE IN GARDEN						Required bedrooms: 3				
Wyre	Mr B Lightman 19 Singer Court Presall Lancs	Bungalow	Yes	Terraced	-	-	1	Communal/ district	No	Yes	Post-war	
	-	NEAR BUS STOP, WARDEN ALARM SYSTEM						Required bedrooms: 0				
Merseyside												
Bootle	Mrs V Jones 12 High Street Bootle Merseyside	Flat	-	-	3	-	2	Gas	No	-	Pre-war	
	0519998479							Required bedrooms: 2				
Liverpool	Mr P J Able 42 Hope House Falcon Estate Grimes Street LIVERPOOL 6	Maisonette	-	-	4	Yes	3	Gas	No	Yes	Post-war	
	0518997973	NEAR SHOPS, ENTRYPHONE TO BLOCK						Required bedrooms: 2				

19 FEB 1982



Wanting to Move?

A guide for those
wanting to rent or
buy in another area. ©

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Housing Booklet Number 12.

Department of the Environment.
Welsh Office.

Important Note. Before starting to buy a house or flat or signing a private tenancy agreement you are advised to consult a solicitor.

Wanting to move?

This booklet is designed to help those who want to buy a low-cost home or to rent in a new area in England and Wales.

All the booklets referred to in the text as Housing Booklets are available free throughout England and Wales from the housing departments of all district and borough councils, from Housing Aid and Advice Centres, and from Rent Officers, and most Citizens' Advice Bureaux have stocks. Their addresses are listed in local telephone directories.

Many of the references to local authorities in this booklet apply also to the Development Board for Rural Wales.

Wanting to buy?

Q1. How much can you afford to pay?

A. You can get advice from a building society, a bank manager, a local authority, or a new town development corporation about how large a mortgage they are likely to be able to give you. The Building Societies' Association (at 34 Park Street, London W1Y 3PF) publishes a leaflet, *Hints for Home Buyers*, and a more detailed booklet, *Building Societies and House Purchase*, both of which can be obtained free of charge. If you have been saving under the Homeloan scheme for two years or more you may qualify for an extra £600 loan and a cash bonus of £110, provided you buy a house or flat below a certain price limit for each region. You can get a leaflet, *Homeloan—Special Help for First Time Buyers*, and details of the current regional price limits from most building societies, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, banks and local authorities.

Q2. Is there a home in your price range?

A. When you have found out how much you can afford, look in the local papers and contact the estate agents in the area to which you want to move to see whether there are any houses or flats in your price range. Also contact the housing department of the local authority or new town development corporation in the area you want to move to and ask them whether they have any low-cost home-ownership schemes for first-time buyers. In particular you should ask

- i. Are they building any low-cost homes for sale to first-time buyers?
- ii. Do they have any empty homes that need improvement available for sale in 'homesteading' schemes whereby a purchaser undertakes to improve the home within a specified period?
- iii. Are any of their houses or flats being improved for sale?
- iv. Do they have any homes available for sale on a 'shared ownership' basis?

With 'shared ownership' you partly buy and partly rent, but you have the right to buy outright later on when you can afford to do so.

Local authorities and new town development corporations can give discounts of up to 30% if they sell empty houses or flats to priority groups such as first-time buyers and to those moving to their area to start a new job.

The local authority can also tell you whether there are any housing associations that might be able to help you. Like local authorities, many housing associations can now improve houses and flats for sale, and also make homes available for sale on a 'shared ownership' basis. If the local authority do not have a list of housing associations in their area ask them for the address of the regional office of the Housing Corporation, who can give you a list. The addresses of the Corporation's regional offices can also be got from the headquarters of the Housing Corporation at 149 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0BN (telephone 01-387 9466).

Q3. Is there a home you could afford, but you can't get a mortgage?

A. If you find a house or flat you could buy but can't get a large enough building society mortgage, the local authority or new town development corporation may be able to help in the following ways:

- i. By nominating you for a building society mortgage under the Support Lending Scheme which is designed to help first-time buyers.
- ii. By guaranteeing a building society mortgage.
- iii. By itself offering you a mortgage.

Q4. Can you get financial help to improve the home you want to buy?

A. Home Improvement Grants can help you to meet the cost of some improvements and repairs. Details are given in Housing Booklet 14, *Home Improvement Grants*. The local council will tell you what their policy is on giving discretionary improvement grants. However, it is mandatory for all councils to give grants for basic improvements such as installing a toilet, bath or sink.

Wanting to rent?

Q5. Can you use the National Mobility Scheme?

A. If you are a tenant of a public landlord, such as a local authority, new town or housing association, and if you have a pressing need to move to another local authority area for job or social reasons (for example, because you are elderly or handicapped), you should ask your landlord whether you can be nominated for a move under the National Mobility Scheme. Even if you are not at present a tenant of a public landlord but you have a pressing need to move, your local authority might be prepared to nominate you. A leaflet, *The National Mobility Scheme*, is available from local authority housing departments, Housing Aid and Advice Centres, new town development corporations, and Citizens' Advice Bureaux.

If you need to move only a short distance, many counties, including London, now have mobility schemes operating within their own boundaries. Your local authority will be able to give you details.

Q6. Can you use the Housing Association Liaison Project?

A. If you are a tenant of one of the housing associations within about 100 miles of London which participate in the Project, you can ask it to nominate you for a move to another association within that area. You can get details from your landlord.

Q7. Can you arrange an exchange with another tenant?

A. If you are a tenant of a local authority, new town or housing association, you yourself may be able with your landlord's consent to arrange a direct exchange with another tenant who wants to move to your area.

You can try the following ways:

- i. Ask your present landlord, and also the local authority or new town development corporation or any housing association in the area to which you want to move whether they know of any tenant who wants to move to your area.