

# Housing options

For adults with a physical disability in Oxfordshire



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# Introduction

If you or someone in your household has a disability, you will know the right home environment is crucial to ensure you and your household can manage normal daily activities.

There are two key issues you will need to consider.

- **Can your existing home be successfully adapted and will it meet your needs into the future? Would improvements to your present home make living there more comfortable?**
- **Would your needs be better met by moving to purpose built or other housing that may already have adaptations or could be adapted to suit?**

This booklet is designed to help you think through these options. Contact details of where you can get more advice, support or information is also included e.g. district council housing officers or occupational therapists.



# Section 1: Thinking about your options

If you're considering a move,  
think about how to get the  
most out of making a change...



## Where are you in your life?

You may be just starting to consider independent living, be going on to further education, university, starting work or settling down with a partner.

These aspects may influence your decisions, choices and future plans.

## Family or friends

Talking the issues through with family and friends, or taking independent advice can be very useful to help you decide on your priorities.

You may also find some of the services listed in this booklet can offer useful support and advice.

## Talk to others who have had adaptations done

Talking to others who have had adaptations done or going to see what the completed work can look like can be very helpful. An occupational therapist is based at Guideposts Trust Independent Living Centre in Abingdon, where you can see examples of some types of adaptations and equipment.

## Realistic expectations

When thinking about adaptations, it is easy to get carried away with plans and ideas. Making sure that your essential needs are met may have to take priority over your possible wishes.

### TOP TIP

It is a good idea to think about what you might need in the future, as well as what you need now.

Finding out as much as possible about all the options gives you the best chance of making the right choice.





## Section 2:

# Helping you to stay at home

If you would prefer not to move but are finding it difficult to manage, there may be ways to make your life easier and safer...

## Help with equipment to aid your independence

You may find you just need a small item of equipment rather than an adaptation involving works to your home.

Small items, such as bath seats and raised toilet seats are now available through Oxfordshire County Council's website:



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/otequipment](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/otequipment)

You can now see and order a range of equipment available from their Direct Access to Equipment catalogue.

For more information contact:



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

### TOP TIP

There is a growing range of small equipment that is available from many suppliers including Boots, Argos, Amazon as well as specialist suppliers in Oxfordshire.

## The Guideposts Trust Independent Living Centre

This service offers anyone in Oxfordshire a free and objective assessment and has an information service for those looking for equipment to enhance independence. They do not sell equipment but have a range of equipment on display to try. You should ring first for an appointment.



[www.guidepostsilc.org.uk](http://www.guidepostsilc.org.uk)



[ilc@guidepoststrust.org.uk](mailto:ilc@guidepoststrust.org.uk)



01235 856212



Guideposts Independent Living Centre, Abingdon Health & Wellbeing Centre, Crabtree Place, Audlett Drive, Abingdon OX14 3GD

### Adaptations to property

If you are disabled and having difficulties managing within your home you may think about whether it is possible to make changes to your property.

The changes can range from something relatively straight forward like widening of doorways, an over bath shower or stairlift to more complicated and expensive adaptations e.g. ramps, level access shower, through floor lift, or ground floor extensions including special kitchens or incorporating bedrooms and bathrooms.

However, before you embark on the adaptation route there are a number of questions for you to consider when deciding whether adapting your home is the most appropriate solution.

#### **Is your condition likely to deteriorate?**

If so, you should also consider whether the adaptations are only a short term solution or if they will make the property suitable for your future needs.

#### **Have you considered the impact of having this work done?**

Having building work done can put a lot of pressure on you and family members and can be disruptive to family life.

It is important to consider the feelings and views of other members of the family especially if they will need to use the adaptations.

### Housing options

#### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home

You may need to think about how you will manage if you are not able to stay in the house whilst major work is going on and what support or help you may be able to get from your family and friends during this time.

#### **Are you a tenant?**

If you are a tenant of a housing association you should make them aware of your difficulties as they may be able to help with more suitable accommodation. Any adaptations to the property will need their agreement. If you are renting privately you will need the permission of your landlord.

#### **Do you own your home?**

If you own your home you need to consider if this is the right property to adapt and the impact of the adaptations on its value and saleability should it need to be sold at a later date in order to fund a move to different accommodation.

#### **Where can you get help?**

It is important to get as much advice and information as possible and your local district council housing options services and occupational therapists within Oxfordshire County Council adult social care teams can help. They will be able to advise you about grants available and if you are likely to be eligible.



## Help with adaptations to your home

### Financial support for adaptations

The District Councils, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council fund Home Improvement Agencies (HIA).

The HIAs support owner occupiers, private tenants and some housing association tenants to get an adaptation to the property to help with difficulties in daily living. They also provide advice on getting financial assistance. If your home is in need of adaptations to suit your particular needs, depending on your income and savings, you may be able to get a disabled facilities grant from your district council to help you meet the cost of the necessary work.

Grants require an occupational therapist referral. An assessment will be carried out to make sure the adaptation best meets your needs. The assessment will help your district council decide what is the most realistic and appropriate solution and what adaptations can be done.

Eligible works may include providing stair-lifts, appropriate toilet, bath or shower facilities, ground floor bedrooms, ramps, door widening and kitchen alterations.

You may be responsible for maintenance if equipment is provided e.g. stair lifts once the warranty period has finished.

Applicants are subject to a financial assessment and may need to contribute funding towards the works themselves in some cases.

If you find that you cannot obtain a grant to cover the full cost of any adaptations you need, and you cannot access any other funding it may be possible for Oxfordshire County Council

to provide a deferred interest loan to help you meet the cost. These loans have to be repaid so a legal charge will need to be placed on the property. This means these loans are only available to people who are owner occupiers.

**Grants are not available retrospectively so make sure you have been in touch with your local council before any work is started.**

A leaflet called 'Oxfordshire Grant Aided Home Adaptations' is available from your local district council offices and their websites.

For further information about adaptations, contact Social and Health Care at Oxfordshire County Council and ask for your needs to be assessed by an occupational therapist.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

#### TOP TIP:

If you have a long term illness or disability, you do not have to pay VAT on some goods, services and building work. For more information visit: [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)





## Help with repairs in your home

### Small repairs scheme

If you are a home owner or tenant, and have a disability or are over the age of 60, your District or Oxford City Council's Home Improvement Agency can help through the small repairs scheme and can organise works such as:

- home safety, including smoke detectors, key safes, grab rails and removing trip hazards
- home security, including security locks, chains and door viewers
- minor electrical works like wiring plugs or replacing fuses
- minor plumbing work like replacing tap washers
- general repairs and other minor jobs, for example installing telephone extensions cables, small carpentry jobs, easing sticking doors, fixing curtain rails, changing curtains, lowering shelves.

However the service cannot undertake gas works, electrical works (other than those indicated above), unblocking drains and toilets, cleaning, decorating or gardening, insulation works or external works. Generally jobs should take less than two hours.

The service has a flat fixed rate cost per hour plus the cost of any materials used. The service may be free to people on low incomes. Please refer to the small repairs service leaflet available from Oxford City/District Councils.

**The service does not cover work that is the legal responsibility of your landlord.**

### Housing options

#### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home

### Help from your landlord

If you are a tenant of Oxford City Council or a housing association tenant you should contact your landlord to see what help is available from them. For example as well as carrying out repairs that they are responsible for doing, some associations offer schemes to help with gardening.

Contact your own landlord to see what help is available.

### Finding a reputable tradesman

If you do not qualify for the small repairs service or the job is outside the type of work undertaken, Age UK Oxfordshire has a business directory which provides details of reputable traders throughout the county. Each company has been checked by Age UK and agreed to abide by the business directory customer charter.

For a copy of the business directory:



[www.aubd.co.uk](http://www.aubd.co.uk)

0800 008 6334 (freephone)

Oxfordshire County Council trading standards run the 'Buy with Confidence' scheme which has a list of approved traders including gardeners.



[trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:trading.standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

0845 051 0845



## Help with safety and security

### Fire safety checks

The Fire and Rescue Service can provide free home safety checks to assess fire risks e.g. to check there is good fire egress for mobility impaired people.

They can also provide specialist smoke alarms or other equipment if you are hard of hearing.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) (see Fire and Rescue webpages)



[fire.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fire.service@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



01865 842999

### Telecare

Telecare equipment monitors the wellbeing of vulnerable people in their home and includes sensors located around the home which detect dangers such as smoke or overflowing water. Other sensors detect if you have a fall, check for extreme temperatures, bed/chair occupancy and movement, epilepsy and there's a bogus caller button.

For more information and to arrange an assessment, contact the social and health care team at Oxfordshire County Council:



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

### Community alarms

If you worry about having an accident or falling ill while at home, a community alarm will allow you to call for help even if you can't get to a phone.

A light-weight alarm button on a cord is worn around your neck or on your wrist. It works in your home and garden. When pressed, the pendant sends a signal to a control centre. Depending on the problem, a trained member of staff will contact a neighbour, friends, family or the emergency services.

Depending on your income and savings, there may be a cost for an alarm service.



## Help with safety and security

### Community Voice Limited Alarms

In some areas of the county, Community Voice Limited provides a community alarm service. Support workers will attend in an emergency in certain circumstances.

Adults with a disability may also be interested in receiving their day time housing related support service, which can be tailored to the needs of the individual.

The service does not provide help with personal care or domiciliary tasks (except in an emergency) but support is available with assessing a person's needs and helping people to access the right service to meet that need.

Depending on your income and savings, this service may be free of charge.



[www.communityvoice.org.uk](http://www.communityvoice.org.uk)



[enquires@communityvoice.org.uk](mailto:enquires@communityvoice.org.uk)



0870 005 6411

### Home and personal security

Your local crime reduction advisor can give you free advice or send you leaflets offering information on home and personal security.

For further information on this service please contact the community safety team at your local district council.

### Housing options

#### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home

### Keeping safe

If you find it difficult to make decisions or protect yourself or you know or work with someone who does, or you want to know more about keeping safe, you can contact Oxfordshire Social and Community Services by ringing our advisers, emailing or visiting the website below about keeping safe.

Adult abuse is when a person is treated in a bad way or in a way that makes them feel frightened or unhappy, harms, hurts or exploits them - particularly by someone they know or should be able to trust.

Abuse is not common but it does happen. We all have a responsibility to do something about it.

**In an emergency please ring 999.**



[www.safefromharm.org.uk](http://www.safefromharm.org.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

### Falls prevention advice

The Oxfordshire Falls Prevention Service offers support and advice to help people avoid falls and to regain confidence if they have experienced a fall.

To access the service, talk to your GP, district nurse or other health practitioner.



[www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk)



## Help with heating costs

### Affordable warmth helpline



Anyone who is struggling with their fuel bills can call the affordable warmth helpline for free impartial advice on:

- improving the energy efficiency levels of your property through cavity wall and loft insulation including the grants and deals available
- switching energy suppliers to find the best deal
- social tariffs provided by the energy companies for vulnerable customers
- advice on fuel debt
- signposting to other active support organisations.

 0800 107 0044 (9am - 5pm Monday to Friday)

### Energy Saving Trust

Offers energy saving tips including an online home energy check. Also has details of the Green Deal and energy saving products.

 [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)  
 0300 123 1234 (9am - 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am - 2pm Saturday)

### Bulk oil buying

For a better deal when buying oil, contact Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) to enquire about oil bulk buying schemes that may operate in your area.

This works by bringing together communities to bulk buy oil to make financial savings.

To find out more and take part:

 [www.oxonrcc.org.uk](http://www.oxonrcc.org.uk)  
 [orcc@oxonrcc.org.uk](mailto:orcc@oxonrcc.org.uk)  
 01865 733214

## Financial help with housing costs

### Council tax and housing benefits

If you are struggling to pay your rent or council tax you may be eligible for benefits. Housing benefit is available to those who qualify financially to help you meet your rent payments.

You may be eligible to claim council tax support if you are on a low income or are in receipt of income support and liable to pay council tax.

For more information contact your local district council.

### Oxfordshire Welfare Rights

If you have received a decision about your benefit but do not agree with it, you may be able to appeal. Oxfordshire Welfare Rights can help with the appeal.



01865 744152

### Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau can give you advice and support about benefits and if you are in debt, offer a range of specialist advice on housing, legal and financial issues.

For more information contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau.



## Housing options

### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home



### Enabling, support and assistance

If you have difficulty managing daily living tasks e.g. getting up, going to bed, dressing, bathing or preparing meals and need some assistance, Oxfordshire County Council can assess your needs and those of your carer and identify what options are available to enable you to manage more easily at home.

This service is for everyone even if you have the means to pay for the service yourself.

The County Council's Social and Health Care team provides information, advice and signposting on social care.

They will do an initial assessment of your needs and then refer you to the most appropriate team e.g. Enablement Team, Sensory Impairment Team, or an Adult Social Care team (with coordinators, occupational therapists and social workers) in your locality.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666



Social and Health Care Team, PO Box 780,  
Oxford OX1 9GX

### Self-directed support

Self-directed support is the process by which a person has choice and control over the support they need to go about their daily lives. Based on your assessed needs, if you require care you will receive a personal budget to fund needs that are eligible for assistance.

A support plan will be required and the plan must be lawful, effective and affordable. Care can be arranged to suit your personal priorities, and allows for greater flexibility and creativity.

The Oxfordshire County Council website is a useful source of information about self-directed support.



[www.takingcontroloxon.org.uk](http://www.takingcontroloxon.org.uk)



[taking.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:taking.control@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### Brokerage

There is a range of options to help plan and arrange suitable care. One way is to use an independent agency to assist you.

Age UK Oxfordshire support brokerage service can provide advice and short term support to help people find, choose and arrange help and care at home.



[www.takingcontroloxon.org.uk](http://www.takingcontroloxon.org.uk)



[brokerhelpline@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:brokerhelpline@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)



01235 849405

### Housing options

#### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home

### Hiring a personal assistant

If you are considering paying someone to help you get on with your day, the 'Support with Confidence' scheme can help ensure you find someone who is trained, checked and has signed a professional code of conduct.

It is an approval scheme administered by Oxfordshire County Council which aims to give people peace of mind when they employ a personal assistant.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportwithconfidence](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/supportwithconfidence)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

## Other useful information

### Support for people affected by Dementia

Moving home can often increase a person's confusion. Care, benefits, adaptations, equipment (including assistive technology) may enable somebody to remain at home.

If remaining at home is not an option, there are options which can provide varying degrees of specialist support and care. Dementia web can provide specialist information.



[www.dementiaweb.oxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.dementiaweb.oxfordshire.org.uk)



[info@dementiaweb.org.uk](mailto:info@dementiaweb.org.uk)



0845 120 4048 (National Dementia Information Line)  
01993 893573 (Oxfordshire Dementia Information Line)

### Support for carers

If you are looking after someone who needs support because of illness, frailty, or disability, then you are a carer.

If caring has a major impact on your life, you can talk to Social and Community Services about the help you may need.



[www.oxoncarers.org.uk](http://www.oxoncarers.org.uk)



[carersoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:carersoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

### Local support groups

There are a range of groups across Oxfordshire who can offer support, advice, information and general help.

These offer support to both individuals and groups of people.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)

### Transport

The Oxfordshire Travel Advice Line (Oxtail) offers free impartial advice on a range of transport options for older people or those with a high level of support needs. Please call them to see where they can help in planning your journey.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[oxtail@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oxtail@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



01865 323738 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday)



## Other useful information

### Oxfordshire Dial-a-Ride

Oxfordshire Dial-a-Ride is a countywide door-to-door minibus service for people with mobility problems who cannot use public transport.

The minibuses are operated by Oxfordshire Transport Services between 9am-5pm, and journeys have to be booked in advance.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[oxda@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:oxda@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 310 1111

### Disabled bus pass

Disabled bus passes are only available to those who either have a permanent disability or a disability that has, or is expected to last at least 12 months. Application forms are available from any library or County Council building reception:



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[freebusepass@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:freebusepass@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 310 1111


#### TOP TIP:

If you are entitled to a disabled buspass and cannot travel alone, then you can also apply for a companion bus pass. This will allow your companion to travel free when they are with you.



## Housing options

### Section 2: Helping you to stay at home

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a pink long-sleeved shirt and dark blue jeans, is sitting in a black wheelchair. She is positioned next to a large, floor-to-ceiling window, looking out with a thoughtful expression. Her hands are clasped in her lap. The room is brightly lit, and the floor is a light, reflective surface.

## Section 3: Moving to a new home

## Moving to a new home

You may decide that you want or need to move on, perhaps because your home cannot be adapted, or you need more care and support than you can receive at home.

Moving will be a success only if your new home is right for you. Here are some questions you might like to ask yourself before making a decision:

- Is the new accommodation within your budget?
- What are the local facilities like? Is there a post office, shop or bank nearby? Will you be able to keep up your hobbies and interests? Are there social clubs in the area?
- What is the public transport like? Are buses regular? Is there a local train station? Even if you drive now, there could be a time when you do not want to or cannot continue driving.
- Will your friends or family be able to visit easily?
- Do you like the area? Do you feel safe?
- If you are a couple, how will the other manage if one of you is left on your own or your partner goes into a care home?
- What type of heating system does it have? Is it easy to keep it warm?
- Will your new home be suitable or easy to adapt if your needs change in the future?

## Renting from a housing association or Oxford City Council

Only Oxford City Council has a social housing stock in addition to housing association properties. The District Councils have transferred all of their social housing stock to housing associations.

There are a range of properties that might suit your needs including sheltered housing and extra care housing as well as houses, flats and bungalows to rent. Some homes are also available for shared ownership (part buy/part rent) where applicants can buy a share of a property (usually between 25% and 75%).

To apply, you need to register on your local District/City Council's housing register. Vacancies will become available from time to time which are already adapted to meet disability related needs.

Priority for re-housing is determined by local allocation schemes based on assessing the applicant's housing need and the urgency of the need to move. Applicants who require an adapted property may be asked to complete a medical assessment questionnaire or undertake an assessment by an occupational therapist. These assessments help determine the correct level of priority to be awarded to your application and also assist in assessing the need for particular types of property and adaptations.

Demand for properties is very high and joining the register does not guarantee you a property so you should always consider other options.

## Moving to a new home

### Renting from the Council or housing association (If you live in Cherwell, Oxford, South Oxfordshire or the Vale of the White Horse)

Cherwell, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse District Councils and Oxford City Council use 'Homechoice' Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system to allocate properties in their respective areas.

The majority of empty properties are advertised on two weekly cycles through the 'Homeseeker' website and in CBL property. Newsletters are available from district councils, LinkPoint offices, libraries, Citizen Advice Bureau and some GP surgeries.

To apply for vacancies, you will need to make a bid to be considered for that property. Allocations are then made based on the priority awarded to the bids that are received.

Under Choice Based Lettings, following a medical assessment, an applicant may be awarded a mobility level.

There are four levels of mobility which are as follows:

- **Mobility 1:** applicant requires level access into and throughout the property. This may include properties in lift assisted blocks of flats.
- **Mobility 2:** applicant requires wide doorways for wheelchair access and electric switches have been placed at a height to suit disabled applicants. This may include properties in lift assisted blocks of flats.

- **Mobility 3:** applicant requires a property with disabled adaptations which may include level access shower, stair lift, walk in bath for example.
- **Mobility 4:** applicant needs purpose built or fully adapted property suitable for someone who uses a wheelchair at all times.

Properties designed or adapted to wheelchair standard or with special facilities, will be prioritised for applicants who need that level of adaptation.

#### Cherwell District Council:



[www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk](http://www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk)  
01295 227001

#### Oxford City Council:



[www.oxford.gov.uk](http://www.oxford.gov.uk)  
01865 249811

#### South Oxfordshire District Council:



[www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)  
01491 823000

#### Vale of White Horse District Council:



[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)  
01235 520202

### Renting from a housing association in West Oxfordshire

West Oxfordshire District Council has a points based allocations procedure, selecting nominations for housing association vacancies in their district from a short list according to preference, suitability and housing need.

Points are awarded for different types of housing need such as potential homelessness, overcrowding, sharing with another household, occupying sub standard accommodation, needing to move to receive support and health reasons

Properties are usually allocated to people with the highest points who require the type of property in a particular location.

Properties that are adapted for mobility needs are reserved for applicants that require the adaptations.

#### West Oxfordshire District Council:



[www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk)



01993 861010

### If you already rent from the Council or a housing association and want to transfer to another property

If you rent from a housing association or live in council housing you can still apply to go on the register as a transfer applicant. Also talk to your landlord as they may be able to help.

'Homeswap' schemes are also available where you can find another tenant in your area or across England with whom to exchange properties. You will need your landlords' permission to exchange. If the property you are living in has been adapted in some way, permission to swap might not be given by your landlord unless the person that you want to exchange with needs those adaptations.

Contact your landlord to discuss further and find out how to register for a swap.

## Moving to a new home

### Renting from a private landlord or buying a property on the open market

If you are looking to rent in the private sector, consider availability and prices in the area you want to live in and what security of tenancy it offers.

Check with your local council housing benefit service to see if you would be eligible for financial assistance with rental costs.

Your local district council's private sector housing team may be able to offer advice about renting in the private sector. A leaflet is available online or from Oxford City/ District Council offices (See contact details on page 27).

To find out what is available in the private sector, contact estate or letting agents in the area you want to live in or look on the 'Rightmove' website:

 [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

The 'accessible property' website advertises accessible or adapted properties for sale and rent

 [www.accessible-property.org.uk](http://www.accessible-property.org.uk)

#### TOP TIP:

The Citizens Advice Bureau will be able to give advice on tenancy agreements and other legal and financial issues.

### Shared ownership (part buy / part rent)

Shared ownership, also often referred to as part-buy/part-rent, allows you to buy a part share of a property and pay a subsidised rent for the part that you don't own.

This gives you the opportunity to buy additional shares as your financial situation evolves or to save a deposit for the next step on the property ladder.

There are very few adapted properties available for shared ownership. Properties for sale as shared ownership in Oxfordshire and the surrounding area are advertised on the 'HomeBuy' website.

To qualify, you should have a household income below £60,000 and be a first time buyer or otherwise be in 'housing need'. This could include being a home owner but having insufficient resources to meet your housing needs.

To apply you need to register with the 'HomeBuy' agent who in Oxfordshire is Catalyst. They will undertake an assessment to check that the product is suitable for you.

 [www.catalysthomebuy.co.uk](http://www.catalysthomebuy.co.uk)  
0845 601 7729

If you have a long term disability, 'Home Ownership for People with Long-Term Disabilities' (HOLD) can help you buy a home on a shared ownership basis. The 'Homebuy' agent can provide further information.

### Shared Lives

Shared Lives carers share their family and community life with someone who needs support. There are adults in Oxfordshire who need care and support. In most cases, a member of their family or a close friend provides this care. Sometimes, however, this is not possible.

Sometimes the person who needs help may be offered sheltered accommodation, day care or residential care.

However these traditional services may not always be the answer, for example where:

- the person has no close family or friends
- the family is no longer able to provide care and support
- relationships between the family have broken down
- the adult does not want to continue living at home
- the adult does not want to enter (or wants to leave) residential care.

Shared Lives may be able to provide the kind of care and support they require by offering them the chance to stay in a Shared Lives carer's home.



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sharedlives](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sharedlives)



[sharedlives@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sharedlives@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 766

### Supported housing

Some people with a disability may want to consider moving to supported housing.

The District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council are currently developing supported housing schemes for people with a physical disability.

These would have 24 hour support available and offer permanent accommodation for people with severe disabilities as well as transitional supported housing.



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



0845 050 7666

### Extra care housing

Extra care housing offers a unique combination of housing, care and various support services all in one development. Its aim is to enable more people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. The housing is primarily for people over 55 but occasionally people under this age can be admitted by exception.

For details of schemes in your area, contact the local District or City Council (see page 27).

## Moving to a new home

### Care homes

If you think that you need very specialist or nursing care that cannot be provided in your own home, moving to a care home could be an option.

Care homes sometimes provide nursing care too, so check what level of care is provided before you move. Care homes are staffed 24 hours a day and all meals are provided.

For a few people moving to a care home may be the only appropriate option. They can offer the opportunity to form new friendships and provide a safe place to live.

How you pay for a care home depends on your personal situation. Your local council may be able to pay all or part of your fees if your capital and savings are below a certain limit. You may be eligible for health funding towards all or part of the care home fees if your health needs are within the criteria set for Continuing Health Care.

Many care homes are geared to the needs of older people or provide support to those with a specific condition such as dementia so there may not be a suitable home in your local area.

For more information, including current care home vacancies:



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



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# Section 4: Moving home checklist



## Moving home checklist

### If you decide to move, this handy checklist should help:

- Check whether your home contents insurance covers you for the move. If it doesn't, arrange for transit insurance. Make sure your home contents insurance has been arranged at your new home for your arrival.
- Make a list of people and organisations you need to contact about your move. The Post Office will redirect mail for 1, 3, 6 or 12 months for a charge.
- If you have pets, ask someone you know to look after them on your removal day.
- Contact utility companies, such as gas and electricity suppliers, in advance to let them know about your move and read the meters.
- Shortly before your move pack a 'survival kit' that includes cash for emergencies, food, washing-up liquid, light bulbs, soap and things to make a drink.
- If you're packing boxes yourself, make sure they are strong enough. Do not overload them so that they're too heavy to lift.
- Consider how and when to transfer any specialist or telecare equipment. Make arrangements so that essential equipment can be transferred so it is ready for immediate use.

### When you have moved:

- Check the smoke alarm in your new home or fit a new one.
- Take gas, electricity and water readings.
- If you have moved away from the area where you lived previously, register with a doctor as soon as you can and find a new dentist and optician.
- If you own the property, check the sum insured on your home insurance. Make sure it is high enough to cover the cost of rebuilding it, including planning consent.
- Ensure you have adequate contents insurance.
- Make sure you have informed all relevant people about your move.

### REMEMBER!

If the equipment has been loaned to you from Oxfordshire County Council you should notify them if you change your address. If the equipment requires specific installation, e.g. a ceiling track hoist, you will need to give a minimum of two weeks notice.



0845 050 7666



# Contact us

This leaflet is available through district and city council offices:

## Oxfordshire County Council

Social and Health Care (previously known as Access Team)

PO Box 780, Oxford OX1 9GX



[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk)



[socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:socialandhealthcare@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



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Out of hours emergency number: 0800 833408

**We welcome any feedback or comments on this booklet.**

Alternative formats of this publication are available on request from the contact details above, including other languages, large print, braille, audio cassette, computer disk or email.

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## Vale of White Horse District Council

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