

What will happen if One Housing transfers to Riverside?

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is One Housing proposing a complete transfer to Riverside?

It was always our intention to consider options for a transfer to Riverside two years after we became a subsidiary in December 2021 and this was set out in the original Customer Pledges leaflet. The One Housing Board has considered the unique financial position facing the housing sector at this time including the rate of inflation, interest rates and energy costs and has decided that a Transfer of Engagements into the Riverside Group at this time is now in the best interests of residents, employees and the business. It will enable us to carry on as normal and continue to deliver improvements to homes and services for our customers.

What is a Transfer of Engagements?

A Transfer of Engagements allows One Housing to transfer all of its assets such as homes and offices to The Riverside Group, as well as its liabilities. This will enable us to continue to deliver our operations and contractual agreements without stopping, making it a seamless process. Riverside has agreed to the transfer and has informed the Regulator of Social Housing. For it to go ahead, shareholders need to agree to it, and they will be asked to consider this in February 2023.

What about the pledges that Riverside and One Housing made?

Riverside will continue to honour the pledges we jointly made when One Housing joined the Riverside Group. Many of the pledges are starting to be delivered, including a range of projects from the annual £2.5m Communities and Livelihoods Fund. We remain committed to ongoing improvements in services and this work will continue. For a reminder of the pledges, visit our website at www.onehousing.co.uk/together.

Will there be any changes to my tenancy/lease or to my rights?

There will be no change to your tenancy agreement/lease, or to your rights. The only difference will be that the name of your landlord/freeholder will change to The Riverside Group Limited. You won't need to sign a new tenancy agreement/lease. Whether you are a tenant, shared owner, leaseholder or want to buy your home using the Right to Buy, you will have the same rights and protection that you have now.

What will happen to my care or support service?

There will be no change to the care or support provision you receive.

What will happen to One Housing staff?

All staff will move into the Riverside Group. They have been fully briefed about the transfer and understand the reasons why this is being proposed by the Board.

Will my rent and service charges go up?

Your rent and service charges are set to increase from April 2023, but this would still happen if your tenancy continued with One Housing. Rent increases for social housing tenants are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing with a maximum increase of CPI (Consumer Price Index) plus 1%. Due to the cost of living crisis the Government has capped rent increases for tenants in the social housing sector at 7% for the year April 2023 to March 2024. The cap applies to all general needs homes and is less than the 11.1% increase which would have applied under the original Government formula. Supported housing is exempt from the cap and the Board is currently considering how the proposed increase will apply to all One Housing customers next year.

Who will I contact?

All services will continue to be provided through the teams you already know. We made a commitment to deliver local services for local people and you can contact us, report a repair and pay your rent all in the same way as you do now. In the longer term, we will look at ways to integrate into the Riverside Group.

Will the repairs service stay the same?

There will be no initial change to the contractors who carry out repairs and improvements to your home and the directly employed operatives at One Housing will still complete your repairs as they do now. Shared owners and other leaseholders would remain responsible for repairs and maintaining their own homes, unless there are agreements in place for us to carry these out.

Will the offices be kept open?

Our offices in Camden and Millwall on the Isle of Dogs will continue to be open, and you will still be able to contact us on the usual telephone numbers. The office at Castalia Square on the Isle of Dogs will remain open 2 days per week and all offices in our supported housing and Extra Care schemes will remain open as they are now.

Are there any disadvantages to the proposal?

The only disadvantage we have identified with the proposal is that One Housing will cease to exist following completion of the Transfer as it will become part of Riverside. However, we feel that the Transfer is in the interests of residents as it will put the new combined organisation in a better position to withstand external economic pressures and in the medium to longer term achieve the benefits for residents as we outlined in the Customer Pledges document last year.

What are the costs associated with the proposal?

The Transfer of Engagements will inevitably involve initial staff time and external advisors' costs. However, we are confident these costs will be quickly recovered through the savings that a larger, streamlined organisation will achieve. Residents will bear none of the costs of the consolidation and the savings made in the longer term will mean we are able to improve and add to the services residents benefit from.

Will there be opportunities for customers to get involved with the changes?

Yes – Both One Housing and Riverside are committed to involving customers in the way services are shaped, improved and delivered. There are opportunities for customers to be involved in decision-making which will continue. We will continue to deliver our Resident Engagement Strategy as previously agreed. If you want to get involved, please let us know on the enclosed questionnaire.

What is the timeline for the transfer?

The Boards will be considering the outcomes of the consultation and whether to proceed with the transfer in February 2023. If the Boards vote in favour of the Transfer of Engagements, we are proposing that the transfer happens on or before 31 March 2023. We will contact you about the outcome of the Board discussions in early March 2023.

I have more questions – how do I get in touch?

We have set up a dedicated email inbox to answer any additional questions at together@onehousing.co.uk or you can contact us at the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 9966.

Your views are important - We are keen to hear your comments on this proposal. Please tell us what you think by completing the Comment form online or returning it by post.