

## HINTS AND TIPS

# Making the move



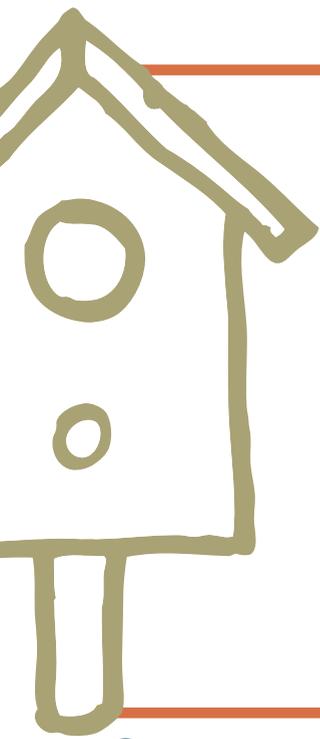
If you are at this stage you have found the new home that is right for you and are getting ready to actually move. Good luck, both with the move and for a happy time in your new home. This is what we have included here:

- Looking after yourself.
- Finding people to help you move.
- Getting ready for removal day.
- Settling in.
- Checklists - planning for the move.

This is one of a series of hints for older people at each stage of moving house.

- Do you want to move or stay?
- Choosing the house that's right for you.
- Reducing what you have.
- Making the move.
- Supporting your relative or friend.

They all connect with each other, and it doesn't matter where you start.



**We have talked to older people who live in the Falkirk and District area and who have moved house. These are the things that they said helped them. We have also produced a Directory that provides more information about the services and community groups in the area.**

**Our most important advice is: This is about what is right for you. If other people are worried – family, friends or staff such as GPs and care workers – you should recognise this, as they may have a point. But it is your life and your decision. There almost certainly will be a way to have the home you want and stay safe and well.**

### **Some general tips**

- Remember that you don't need to do this on your own. There are people who will help you at every stage.
- Think about what things are important to you. Know what your priorities are.
- Make a list of things to ask or find out about – jot things down as you think of them.
- Take your time. Do it in small steps. You don't need to do it all at once.
- Sometimes it helps to have a plan and know what you are aiming for. Then you can think about each point and how that helps you achieve your plan.
- Other people don't make decisions that way. They just know when something is the right decision for them. Remember that's ok too. (But our checklists will still be useful.)
- Check out the options.
- Gather information from different sources if you can. If they all point to something being good (or bad) it probably is.
- Ask people who have been in your situation. Find out what they did and how it has worked for them. You don't have to follow their example but it will help you work out what is right for you.

- Talk to people. Ask family and friends and other people you know.
- Get specialist advice and information, especially for legal and financial things.
- If your choices affect other people, make sure you include them in your discussions and plans. And do it early on.
- Be willing to make compromises. If you know what is important to you it is much easier to compromise on things that don't matter so much.
- Try to think of the positive and exciting aspects of a change if you can. They are usually in there somewhere, even in difficult situations.
- Sometimes worrying about making the right decision or the best decision almost stops us making any decision. When that happens, start by making one change or decision. Getting something decided – even a small thing – can help with the rest.
- If it feels hard or upsetting, get out and get some fresh air if you can. Go away for the day, or an hour or two. Being somewhere different often gives us a fresh view on a problem.

## Looking after yourself

Lots of people find moving is stressful, so planning to look after yourself is a good idea. As we get older we usually can't do the lifting and standing that we did during our earlier house moves, so pacing yourself is also good.

### Physical wellbeing

- Watch you don't get too tired or give yourself problems by trying to do too much.
- If you have a long-term health problem, talk to your GP or the health team about how to plan for the move. They may have tips on the timing of your medication, for example.

### Emotional and mental wellbeing

- Moving house is stressful for everyone. Plan ways to reduce the stress, such as going for a walk or listening to music that is calming. We've listed good places for help with managing stress in any situation.
- It is also something that brings back memories and can get quite emotional. Even if you are confident this is the right move for you, be ready for the feeling sad and happy memories side of life.

- If you or someone else gets anxious about change and upheaval, work out what will be easiest for them. Examples are that person not being around on the day of the move, or having a friend there whose only role is to be with the person and make the day work well for them.

**“Get removal people who will go at your pace. I don’t like being rushed, so I asked about being able to take my time unpacking boxes.”**

### **Being forgetful**

- Plan ahead if you or someone else who is moving has difficulties with remembering things.
- Make as many lists as you need and use whatever sort of communication is helpful. Use photographs to help you remember what is in boxes or where things go, for example.
- It may be easier if someone who gets confused or forgetful is staying with someone else for the day of the move, or the few days either side.
- Photographs and labels on doors and cupboards in the new house can help you get settled in and find where things go.

## **Needing more support**

- Think about any changes you want to make to the new house to make life easier for you or anyone else who will be living there. Get any building work or changes to the house done before you move in if possible.
- Find the new Health Centre and other places where you get care and support in advance. Talk to them about the move and how you move to the new team if you are moving into a different area.
- If you or someone else has home care, or any other support such as lunch clubs or befriending, talk to the services about how they can help you through the move.

**“My husband has dementia as well as problems with his balance. I was worried about the move. The team came to the new house and gave suggestions such as clear plastic doors on kitchen cupboards and big labels on the room doors and changes to the bathroom to help him be more independent. We had extra help from the home care workers the week of the move. Bill was fine and we’ve settled into our new home more easily than I expected.”**

## Finding people to help you move

### Removal companies

Most people want to get someone to move their furniture and so on. Even if you did most of the work yourself when you were younger, you may want more help now.

Ask people you know and trust what removal company they used – and ask them if they'd use them again.

Ask for a written quote or estimate and get them to break it down so you can decide what you want or not. Ask them to include information about their insurance - what it is and what it covers. For example, some removal companies won't insure boxes you have packed yourself!

Some removal companies might give reduced rates to senior citizens. It is worth asking and worth negotiating (haggling) the cost.

**“Mum planned out where she wanted the furniture to go but then got out of the way on the day of the move. She would just have made herself ill by doing too much so removed herself from the temptation to keep going. She stayed overnight**

**with her friend and they brought the food in after we had done most of the work. Then they did the bits that made the new house look pretty and feel like her home.”**

### What do removal companies do?

Removal companies have changed over the years, just like lots of other services. You might find things are different from the last time you moved. So just ask as many questions as you need to.

Removal companies can:

- Provide boxes for you to pack and then unpack.
- Pack your possessions but leave you to unpack.
- Come and pack all your belongings and then unpack everything at the new house.
- Move all the furniture and put them into the rooms at the new house that you've told them to.

**“When mum moved to be near us my nephews hired a van and did it all. Mum is good with them so she wasn't that bothered when they were moving her stuff out. And whenever she got anxious or confused they just stopped and had tea and cake.”**

**“When mum moved in with us we tried to get her dressing table and clothes as close as we could to her old room, with big pictures on the doors to show what was in each cupboard and drawer. Her sight is so poor these days that written labels wouldn’t help.”**

**“My friends helped me in relays: a few people for the packing up, a few more people on the day, and then the third team for the settling in stage. That way no-one got too tired. One of them had learned that trick when she had moved.”**

## **Finding a removal company**

There are some national associations for removal companies. Member removal companies have to meet certain standards including good working practices, safe transportation of goods, insurance.

**“The lads at the Community Project are building up their experience. I wanted to give them the work. It cost less but took longer – because they are learning. They did a good job and I’m a satisfied customer.”**

## **The National Guild of Removers and Storers**

www.ngrs.co.uk  
T: 01494 792279

## **The British Association of Removers**

www.bar.co.uk  
T: 01923 699 480

## **Trusted Mover**

This is a website developed by the British Association of Removers. It is a customer feedback site and you can read comments from previous customers. [www.trustedmover.org/index.php](http://www.trustedmover.org/index.php)

## **Community groups and friends**

There are also community groups who help people move house, especially older people or people who need a bit of extra help for other reasons. Some people also have family and friends who can help.

There are lots of reasons for using someone you know.

- The cost is less.
- You may want to give opportunities to the group or the people who are doing the work.
- It can be good to have people who know you if you find the house move – or any change – upsetting or confusing.

Our tip is to take a similar approach to these arrangements as for the removal companies.

- Ask what it will cost. If it is family or a friend, you may want to offer to cover the hire of the van, for example.
- If a community group say they ask for a donation, find out what sort of donation is reasonable or expected.
- Ask about insurance. If they don't have insurance, find out if your own house insurance will cover you if anything gets lost or broken.
- Ask if they know how to do the job safely? Have they got enough people to lift the heavy and awkward stuff? Has someone given them advice on keeping themselves safe?

## People to tell that you are moving

### These are our tips

- Tell your neighbours and friends. Even if they were part of helping you decide to move or finding somewhere, it can be easy to forget them in the rush of all the practical side of things.
- Talk to your GP and any health and care services, especially if you like them. You might be able to keep

these services even if you move to another area. If you do have to change, ask them to introduce you to a key person in the new team before you move.

- Think about places that are important to you such as churches or social groups. Find the places in your new area and if possible go along before you move. Tell a few people that you will be moving into the area.

**“When I moved friends from the church did it for me. There wasn't that much to move. They wouldn't take any money but at least I paid for the fish suppers - first meal in the new house was a picnic before we even unpacked the plates. It felt in the spirit of having friends and making good changes in my life.”**

**“We went along to the shops in the new area just after we'd confirmed the house move. There was information about a coffee morning and other useful contacts in the wee cards in the shop window. It helped us make friends and feel at home in the area.”**

## Getting ready for removal day

- Get a friend to take your dog or other pet. Get them to keep it until you have moved.
- Pack a small box of the essential things. Take it with you. Essentials are things like kettle, mugs, tea and coffee, sugar and milk, water bottle, biscuits, radio.
- Put essential things like medication and equipment you need in a brightly coloured bag or box and mark DO NOT PACK.
- Plan something easy for your first meals – breakfast next morning as well as your tea on the evening of the move.
- Think of someone – ideally tall and strong – to help with the wee things that you want done on the day of the move which will be awkward for you. You probably just need them for an hour or two later in the day, which may make it easier for them to do you the favour.
- Ask a friend or neighbour to help look after the old house if you will be at the new house. This can be checking each room in case anything has been left behind and doing a final wiz round with their Hoover.

**“My daughter brought a meal round to us so we didn’t need to cook. We were tired – it was lovely.”**

**“I got someone in to put up the curtain poles. I wanted the curtains up straight away. The removal company don’t do that.”**

**“Have a radio – my tv wasn’t working for a few days so the radio was good company.”**

## Settling in

The move to a new home doesn’t end when your furniture arrives at your new house. You still have to make it feel like your home.

- Have some friends to help you over the next few days with tasks like moving furniture into the positions that are comfortable for you.
- Take time to get your cushions and pictures and ornaments out and looking nice.
- You can use photographs of the old house to help get the positions right if this is important for you, such as when someone has sight or memory problems.

## Checklist: Planning for the move

Get at least 3 quotes from removal companies. Book early. A good removal company can be booked up months in advance. Start reducing the things that you have in your home.

### Check how much notice you have to give to

- Your landlord if you are renting.
- Companies such as gas, electricity, phone, cable and so on.

### 2 or 3 months before you move

- If anyone uses support or care services, talk to them about how they can support you over the move and in your new house.
- If your current services do not cover the new area, talk to the Council about other sources of support.

### 4 or so weeks before you move

- Arrange for disconnection of gas cooker, washing machines and any other appliances you are taking with you. If you are using a Care and Repair service they may need notice of the date you want.

- Arrange for someone to remove things like curtain rails and so on and then put them back up in your new home.
- If packing yourself, get boxes delivered by removal company. Give yourself plenty of time to pack.
- Tell your neighbours about the removal van, as it may make access awkward for them.
- Change of address details – start sending letters, emails and so on to notify change of address. You can use the postal redirection service.

### 2 or so weeks before you move

- Arrange for someone to look after any pets on the day of the move, or maybe for a few days before and after it.
- Tell people who deliver things to your house such as milk and newspapers. Arrange the date for the service to stop.
- Start running down food in your freezer.

**“My new neighbours popped in. They had also moved recently and knew what it was like. They’ve been a good help in getting me settled.”**

## 1 week before you move

- Do last minute laundry.
- Make up box of essential items that do NOT get packed: e.g. toilet paper, light bulbs, tea making things, toiletries, pen and paper, torch, a few pieces of basic cutlery, and the charger for your mobile phone.
- Pack valuables and documents and put them in a safe place to take them with you, or leave with a friend or relative, so there is no risk of them getting lost.

## 1 day before you move

- If you are doing the packing: All packing should be done except essential items in the kitchen and bathroom.
- Charge mobile phone if you have one.
- Do a final check of cupboards, the loft, shed so that nothing is left behind.



## Moving day

- Make a note of all meter readings.
- Try to get someone to have a final walk around to make sure nothing has been left.
- Do you have to do a final clean of the house?

## At your new home

- Make sure all services are working - electricity, water and gas.
- Take meter readings.
- Put kettle on for yourself and for the people doing the removal.
- Try to be at new house before removal team so that you can tell them where things should go.
- Check inside of removal van thoroughly before the removal team leave. It is your responsibility to make sure all your belongings have been removed out of the van.
- Don't try and unpack everything today.
- Take your time. Get help from family and friends.

# Checklist: Telling people you are moving

Use this list as a starting point. You will have other people to add.

Make your own list.

Who?	Contact details, any useful notes	Done?
Bank or building society		
Inland revenue		
Credit cards		
Store cards / catalogues		
Rental / hire purchases		
Pension		
Savings		
Life insurance policies		
National insurance		
Social security		
Contents insurance		
Buildings insurance		
Services		
Electoral register		
Council tax		
Water		
Electricity		
Gas		
Telephone land line		
Mobile		
Satellite / cable/ internet		
Post office mail re-direction		

## Contacts and more information

Strategy Team on 01324 590797 (then select option 2) or email [strategic.housing@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.housing@falkirk.gov.uk)

Kay Wood on 07753229673 or email [olderpeoplesforum@btconnect.com](mailto:olderpeoplesforum@btconnect.com)

All of the Moving Assistance Hints and Tips the Directory of Services are available from the Wisdom in Practice Website <http://www.wisdominpractice.org.uk/falkirk-moving-assistance/>

Falkirk Moving Assistance project has been funded by Falkirk Council through the Change Fund.

It has been developed and delivered by Outside the Box with help from the Make It Happen Forum.

The Make it Happen Forum is for people aged 50 and older to get involved and have their say in community life.

**[www.makeithappenforum.org.uk](http://www.makeithappenforum.org.uk)**

