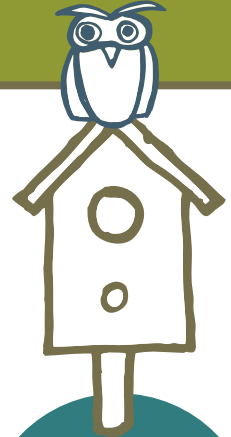


MOVING ASSISTANCE



Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project

Helpful tips for moving house

HINTS AND TIPS ON

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

HINTS AND TIPS

Do you want to move or stay?



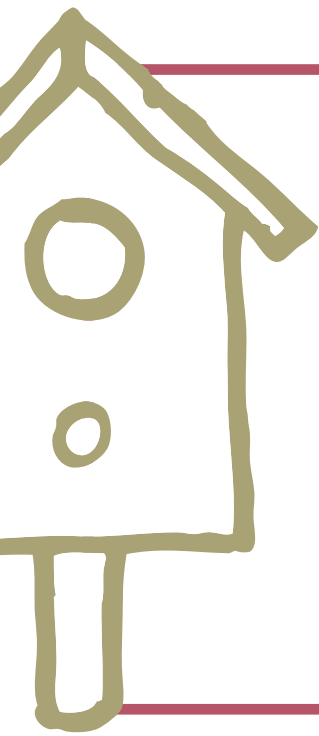
This set of hints and tips is for people who are beginning to think about whether their current house is still right for them. This is what we have included here:

- Why you might want to move house.
- Checklist – is my house still right for me?
- Where to get advice.

This is one of a series of hints and tips 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.

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 is important to you. Know what your priorities are.
- Make a list of things to ask or find out about – jot them down as you think of them.
- Take your time. Do it in small steps. You don't need to do it all at once.
- 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.

Talk to people.

- Ask family and friends and other people you know.

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.

- 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.

Make decisions in your own way. • Some people like to have a

plan and know what they are aiming for. Then they can think about each point and how that helps them achieve their 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.)

- 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.

“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.”

“Gather information from different sources if you can. If they all point to something being good (or bad) it probably is.”

Why you might want to move house

The starting point is what you want your home to give you.

“I live at the top of the hill. I can still drive but I won't be able to soon. There is no bus and there are no shops nearby. Maybe now is the time to start looking for somewhere in the town.”

This is what most people want from their home:

- Being in a location that is near people they know – neighbours, friends, family, activities and groups they enjoy.
- Being handy for services – shops, library, social club and the like. Convenience for transport is also important for many people.
- Having support and care services that they like – a good Health Centre with staff who you know, a good home support team, a group that has a friendly lunch club, and so on.

- A house that feels safe is warm and comfortable – a place that works for you.
- Space and rooms to have the life that you want.
- A house that is easy to look after and not too expensive to run.
- Outside space – your garden if you want that, or no garden if that’s what you prefer; being close to parks and other open spaces.

“I am the carer for my sister and would prefer to be nearer her. I could move near her, or she could come near me. Or we could move in together – that would be a right laugh!”

“I would like to be nearer my family with the grandchildren able to drop in.”

As we get older, our needs can change. We’ve made a checklist to help you work out what is right for you.

Our advice is to think about what you want now, and what you might want in a few years. That helps you think about whether you want to move to a new home or whether you want to make changes to what you have now.

- Try to be as specific as you can about what you want to change – there may be solutions that you haven’t thought about.
- For some people making alterations to their home or getting some extra support or help can make all the difference and help them stay where they are.
- For some people moving is the best option.

“The house was good when my family were at home but it is too big now.”

“My family want me to move near to them. But I want to stay here – this is where I’ve been all my life and I’m happy here. We are coming to a compromise. I’ll look for somewhere smaller and have an alarm and so on, and they will have to learn to cope with relying on phone calls to know if I’m ok.”



**Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project**

Checklist – is my house still right for me?

Aspect	My assessment			Points to consider
	Ok now	Change in a few years	Change now	
Location of the house				
Size of the house, or layout of the rooms				<p>Look for areas that have the sort of houses you will need</p> <p>Check out options for improving what you have</p>
Upkeep				Can you get help with this?
Garden – easy to manage? Too big? Not big enough?				Gardening clubs may know people who can help you find someone to take on a big garden, or let you work in an allotment or someone else's garden
Keeping warm, cost of fuel				Grants to improve fuel efficiency
Easy to keep in touch with friends				
Looking after yourself				Talk to your GP and the Council, check what support is available
Access to good services				If a service like your GP or support at home is important, you might want to stay in the area they cover
Your priorities				
Your priorities				

Do you want to move or stay?

Our tips

- If most of the points are ok, look at ways to improve the few that are not ok.
- If most points are ok now but likely to change, you can start planning ahead now.
- If there are matters that need sorting now, look for options that improve these for you. But still think of the other factors too.
- If several points are in the 'need to change now' column, this should help you work out your priorities for your next house move.

“Our house was fine but the hill is becoming a problem. So we’ve started looking for somewhere easier in a location that is better for us now. It’s not immediate, but we’re planning to move in the next year or two.”

“Mum and Dad had been planning to move in a few years, but after Mum’s fall it became more urgent. But it was good to still think about what they wanted, so the move was to the right place for them and not just moving in a panic.”

“The checklist is a good idea because it makes you think about each aspect of your house. I was so caught up with the size of the house and going somewhere smaller, I forgot about being near friends. It helps you think about what you can improve in your own house while you look around.”

“I talked to the manager of the care at home service who support mum. Now I know the area they cover, we’ve all decided to narrow the location down to that but be more flexible about what sort of house it is.”



Where to get advice

These are some of the organisations that other older people told us helped them.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Carers Trust

**Small Repair and
handyperson service**

Later Life Information Centre

Solicitors for Older People

“My John used to do all the little jobs around the house. He isn’t able any more. We live in our own house, I didn’t realise that we could get help from the Council. We got help through the Small Repair and Handyperson Service. It was great. They fixed the door so that we don’t have a draught anymore. They fixed the taps that were leaking and sorted the light switch that was broken.”

“The doctor got the OT (Occupational Therapist) to come and see us because we were both struggling at home. She asked us lots of questions and watched us get around the house. She organised handrails to help us at the front door and sorted the bathroom out for us. We can manage a lot better now.”

“We talked to the Housing Association about a possible move, maybe next year. The lady gave us good suggestions on ways to make the house work better for us now and reassurance about having choices for the years ahead.”

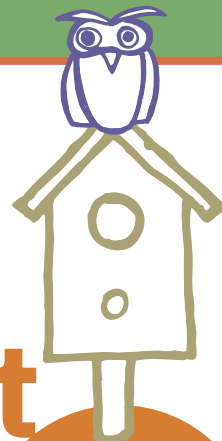
“The solicitor was helpful about the money and legal side of releasing money for changes to our current house and moving home.”

“Get some extra people on the list of possible helpers if you can. If the person who is moving is frail there may be extra things to do that the rest of us don’t think about. Another source of suggestions is really useful.”

Do you want to move or stay?

HINTS AND TIPS

Choosing the house that is right for you



Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project

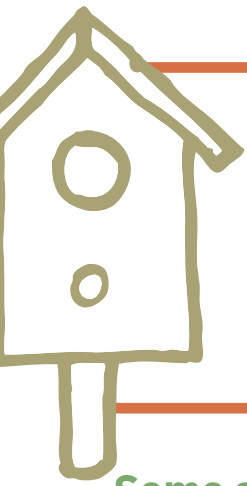
If you are at this stage you are thinking that moving may be right for you. Now you want to check out the options. There are 3 aspects to choosing a home:

- The right house and location.
- Links with any support you might need.
- Options around buying, renting or sharing your home.

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.



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.

“My advice is to keep an open mind and be prepared to compromise.”

Finding the right house

These are some of the points older people have found it useful to think about.

What and where?

- Detached, semi-detached, terrace, flat – don’t mind?
- Live in the country, village, or town?

What are the basic things that you need in a new home?

- Number of rooms - do you need a spare room for anyone?
- Type of rooms to make it easy to manage now and over the next few years.
- Bathroom with a shower or bath? Do you need space for a wheelchair or help from carers?
- Separate toilet from bathroom?
- What type of kitchen do you need? – layout and lighting can make a difference.
- Where do you like to eat? – in the kitchen or have a sitting room with a table?
- What about outdoor space? Do you need car parking? Do you want a garden or just a small space to sit out and have a few plants?

“I thought I’d like a flat but I’d never lived in one. I went and visited a couple of friends. I realised I didn’t like having people above me. I managed to find a small house.”

What will help you feel independent?

- Able to get out and about and do the things that you like doing.
- Steps to front door? You might want a ramp or good handrails, or space to put them in.
- On a bus route.
- Car parking space.

Family and friends, and being part of the community

- Shops close by.
- Near to friends and family, or able to get to see them.
- What will make it easy to get to groups and other social things that you do?
- Is there access to community activities in the area?

Feeling safe – what makes you feel safe?

- Streets with lighting.
- No dark alleys that you have to walk down to get home.
- Close to other people.
- Good neighbours.

Money things

- Think about the costs of the house – the price or the rent and council tax.

- Find out about what it costs to run and to heat.
- If you are living in a flat, find out about shared costs or service charges.

Getting support

For most houses there are no care services linked to it.

- You organise the care and support you want if and when you need it.
- Having the house and the support separate makes it easy to change one and keep the other as your circumstances change.
- You can get an alarm fitted easily. This will alert someone if you fall or need help – a relative or a care service, whoever you choose.
- People who need high levels of support can get this in ordinary houses.

“I went with my pal for a walk in the area I was thinking about moving to. It’s a good way to look at the houses, decide if it feels nice and safe. You can chat to people who are working in their garden and to the people in the corner shop, and find out a lot that way.”

There are some types of housing that have care attached to them.

Sheltered housing is designed for older people or others needing extra care.

- There is usually a group of flats all with residents in these circumstances.
- There is someone on site or nearby, at least for part of the day.
- The design of the houses is planned for people who need support, such as an open layout and alarms in the rooms.
- Very Sheltered Housing has an even higher level of support and is especially for people who need this.

Some Housing Associations

have houses that are for older people with easy access to care:

- The care is for some tasks – they will have details on this.
- If you need a higher level of support, you get this organised separately – the contacts in the will tell you how to do this.

“I didn’t want to move because I didn’t think I could take my dog. Some landlords are fussy. I found a really nice flat and my dog came too. It wasn’t a problem at all.”

Retirement housing is designed for people who want smaller houses and neighbours in similar circumstances.

- Each person rents or owns their own flat or house.
 - In some places, if you own a flat there may be limits on who you can sell it to if you decide to move. Others are marketed as ideal for older people but are available to anyone who wants to live there.
 - Someone looks after the property – building maintenance, gardening – but there is a charge for this each month or year.
 - Sometimes there are shared facilities such as a residents’ lounge and guest bedrooms.
 - There may be a low level of support from a member of staff around part of the time, or contacts with services that provide cleaning. If you want any more support you need to organise it yourself.
- Care homes provide a much higher level of care and support.
- People have their own bedrooms and bathroom, and share common areas such as lounges and dining rooms.
 - There might be a kitchen where residents can make drinks and snacks if they want to.

- The staff at the care home provide all of the care and support you need.

Housing options

The most common options are:

- Buying a house or flat.
- Owning a property but releasing money to use for adapting or improving it, or other costs. You can get advice about this.
- Renting from a Housing Association. There are usually limits on who can get houses, such as a connection with the local area, and many have waiting lists.
- Renting from a private landlord.
- Moving in with family or moving to a new house with family members.

“Visit an area you are thinking about at different times of the day and week if you don’t know it already. Try to go along to places such as the community centre, or the church or golf club as a visitor to see what they are like and if folk are welcoming.”

“After my husband passed away I moved to a flat which was nice and easy to manage. It was a good house but the wrong location. I missed the friends in the old area where we’d brought up our family. Last year my daughter was saying the same thing. She wanted to move back too, but it is mostly family-sized houses in that area. So we decided to club together. We’ve bought a bungalow just across from the shops and beside the bus stop. You meet everyone there.”

Organisations to help you

It can be useful to talk to people who have a role in giving advice or specialist information. They can point you to other sources of information and help.

Some of the things that they will want to talk about include:

- Why you want to move.
- What you want to make better by moving.
- What things you want in a new home.
- Where you would like to live.

- Your financial circumstances:
 - Your income and savings.
 - Any benefits you get – they might be able to tell you about some benefits that you are eligible for that would help you.
 - What it costs you just now to live where you are

If it is some time since you bought or sold a house you will find that there are a few new things that buyers and sellers have to do.

Estate Agents and solicitors who provide services for people who are buying or selling can advise you on all the things that need to be done. They usually arrange these things for you as part of their service. Estate agents and solicitors should also be able to give you an idea about what houses in your area are being sold for. That helps you plan out what you can do.

Some of these organisations that people told us about are:

- Falkirk Council Housing Service.
- Falkirk Council Social Work.
- Housing Options Scotland.

- Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Later Life Information Centre (Age Scotland).
- Solicitors for Older People Scotland (SOPS).
- Carers Trust.

Our tips

- Take a family member with you or someone else that you know and trust.
- Talk to them beforehand so they know what you want to find out – they can help take notes or remind you of things you wanted to ask.
- Have a list of your questions written down.
- Take information with you about your circumstances, financial and so on, as well as what things you are looking for in a new home – it is easy to forget things when you are in a meeting.
- Ask for another meeting so that you can think about what you've heard and ask more questions or to clarify things.
- Don't feel that you have to make any decisions straight away.
- You can go and talk to more than one advice service.
- Ask people you know and trust who they got advice from.

HINTS AND TIPS



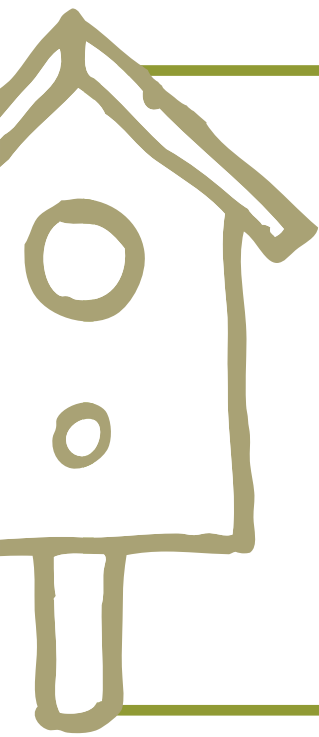
Reducing what you have

Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project

This set of hints and tips is for people who want to reduce the amount of furniture and other things they have in their homes. It could be because you are preparing to move house, or it could be to get more space in your current home.

This is what we have included here:

- Why reduce what you have and why it can be hard to do.
- How to sort it out.
- What to do with the things you no longer want.



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.

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 .

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.)

“If you are moving to a smaller house or just to a different house it is a good idea to only take with you the things that you need and are important to you. There is no point paying a removal company or getting family and friends to help you move boxes of things and furniture that you no longer need or want.”

- 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.

Why reduce what you have and why it can be hard to do

Some people regularly have a 'clear out'. Other people tend to hold onto things, in case they come in useful.

Clearing out what we have can sometimes be more difficult than usual, even for people who are used to having a clear out.

- Some possessions bring back lots of memories. It can be hard letting go of the past.
- Making a big change in our lives can be very stressful and emotional, and clearing things out is part of that.

“I know I don't really use these things but I paid good money for them – I don't want to throw them out.”

“I get rid of old clothes every couple of years – I don’t want to hang onto things that I don’t like or don’t wear anymore. This clear out is just a bigger version of that.”

“I have 3 sets of wedding china – mine, my mum’s and my mother-in-law’s. I never use them but it still feels wrong to give them away. The young ones today don’t even understand what the wedding china meant in our day.”

“There isn’t going to be room in the new house for the 3 piece suite. But it was the first thing Jim and I bought for our first house. I remember the day we chose it – the shop in the High Street, what we were both wearing, everything. It’s hard to let go of the memories.”

How to sort it out

- Start in plenty of time. It can take time to go through things and decide what you want to keep and what you don’t need anymore.
- Take your time if you can.

- Have nice music on or a radio playing in the background
- Do it in stages.
- Have company - that way you can stop and chat and remember things.
- Have someone who is not so involved emotionally – a friend is sometimes better than family, for example.
- Stop and have tea or a short break as soon as you start to flag or get upset. Don’t press on just because you’ve decided to finish a room or cupboard before you stop.

There are things you can do if you can’t decide and feel there is not enough time to do it slowly.

- Ask family or friends to keep some boxes for you.
- There are storage companies where you can hire storage space for anything.

“I used a 3 boxes and a bag system. One box for things to keep, one box for things to offer to family, one box for the charity shop and the rubbish bag for things that were broken.”

“Just accept that there are some days you don’t want to clear things out. Don’t give yourself a hard time.”

“We put the old photograph albums to one side, to go through them later. If we’d started looking at them we’d never have finished.”

“I started early and had an extra box for things I couldn’t decide what to do with, didn’t want to let go or wasn’t sure about. After a few months I went back and looked at them again. I realised I hadn’t used any of it so it made it easier to pass them on to the charity shop.”

“I helped my mum by trying to make it an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon. For some things we spent time chatting and remembering things. We had cake and coffee and lots of chat.”

“We went through the more treasured things first. We both had more energy and wanted to take our time. When we got to more practical kitchen things and the odds and ends

that had been left at the back of the cupboards – we realised we’d not used some of them for years. It was much easier to get rid of them.”

“Don’t try to do it on your own.”

“My granddaughter’s boyfriend got the boxes out of the attic for me. My granddaughter came and helped me go through them. We did it once a week for several weeks. She and I had a lovely time – and what a laugh we had. She comes regularly to see me now that I’ve moved. We get on well.”

“It can feel hard leaving your home and moving somewhere new. Try and find the positive aspect about moving and changing things.”

“Think about it as an adventure – a new beginning.”

“We decided to make it fun. Instead of thinking that we’d have to get rid of some of our old big furniture, we made it

...

fun by having a day out with our daughter and going to look at new furniture. The new beds are much nicer than the old ones we had. We don't need wardrobes, the new house has built in ones."

"My granddaughter helped me choose some new cushions to brighten up the settee and she and her mum came and painted the kitchen and sitting room a lovely light colour. My old house had been dark. This one is much brighter."

"Think of where your old things are going and who will benefit. We gave a lot of extra furniture and furnishings to a charity that helps people who have had a hard time set up a new home. Some of my wife's clothes ended up in the dressing up box at a playgroup. Jean would have loved all of that!"



What to do with the things that you no longer want

There are a number of different ways of dealing with the things that you no longer want.

- Family – give them first choice of anything you don't want anymore.
- Friends – you might want to pass some things to friends.
- Charity shops.
- Projects that pass furniture and household stuff on to people who need them.
- Selling items – through local press, cards in shops, or internet sites such as eBay and Gumtree.

On charity shops: some will take anything you take to them. Others specialise, for example they only take clothes and small bric-a-brac. Some will take furniture but others won't. Our advice is to contact them before you go.

"I decided what I wanted to keep. Then I asked my family if they wanted any of the things that I didn't want any more. It didn't feel as hard as I had expected."

“Remember that not everyone likes the same things so it helps if you make it really easy for them to say no without them worrying that they will hurt your feelings.”

“I gave some things as presents to my family. If they didn’t want them it didn’t matter.”

“I gave some things to charity shops – some charity shops can come and collect the big things.”

“My daughter sells things on eBay. She helped me sell some of my things that way. She did it all from her house. The money went towards some new furniture that I needed. It was fun choosing new things.”

“My son got a local auctioneer to come and look at the furniture. He took 2 items away and sold them for me. What a laugh – they are ‘in fashion’ now. I used the money to buy some new furniture.”

“We contacted the council. They came for a special uplift and took away the things that were broken or no one wanted.”

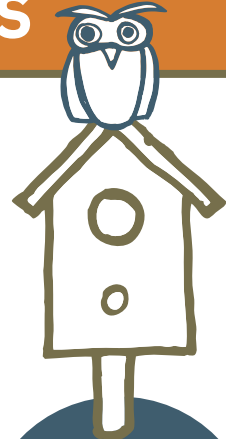
“I swapped my large furniture for smaller items at furniture recycling reuse project. They took the old furniture away and brought the new items to the new house for me.”

“I got my daughter to do the on-line selling for me. I didn’t want strangers coming to my house. She came and took the chair away to her house and ‘sold’ it from there. She made sure her husband was in her house when the people came to pick up the chair.”



HINTS AND TIPS

Making the move



**Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project**

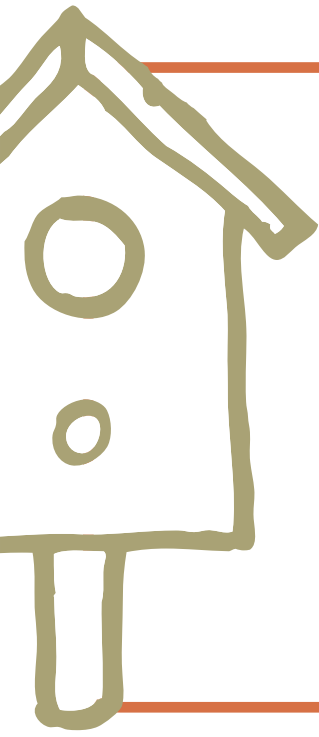
If you are at this stage you have found the new home that is right for you and are getting ready to actually move. Good luck, both with the move and for a happy time in your new home. This is what we have included here:

- 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.

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

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.

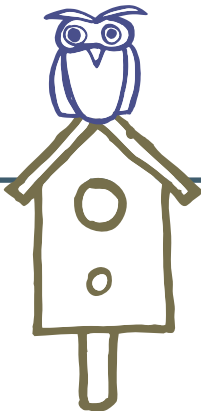
“My new neighbours popped in. They had also moved recently and knew what it was like. They’ve been a good help in getting me settled.”

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 from 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		

HINTS AND TIPS



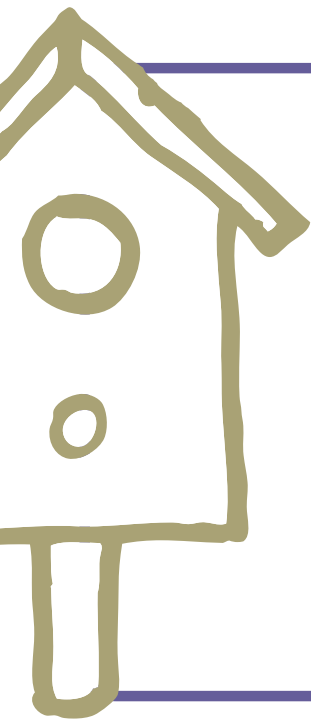
Supporting your relative or friend

Falkirk
Moving
Assistance
Project

The Falkirk Moving Assistance project has written tips for people who are thinking about moving house. This set is for the people who are giving them encouragement and support – family, friends and neighbours.

This is what we have included here:

- Some general tips to help you through any aspect.
- Supporting your relative or friend at each stage of the process.
- What to do if you are worried about someone.



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.

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.

“My brother thought that we should be the ones giving mum advice, but she has always talked things over with Auntie Helen.”

“Our big mistake was starting the process off too early. My sister was worried and thought mum should move after dad died. I think we would have got there sooner if we had let mum go at her pace.”

“Even once dad had decided to move it took ages to go and visit different places. He wasn’t for rushing anything.”

Our tips

Take enough time

Making a change in where someone lives is usually more complicated and takes longer than you might expect – but for positive reasons.

- There will be options and choices at each stage, because people have developed good services and supports for people who need extra help.
- It can take time to find out what is possible and consider the options.
- Our sets of Hints and Tips should give you lots of information and ideas.

“Overall, it probably took mum 2-3 years to decide to move, and then another year to find a smaller house because she wanted to stay in the area we knew.”

Try to make it right for everyone

Remember that there may be several people involved in all of this.

- If a couple are living together – such as your Mum and Dad – the aim is a good outcome for both of them, even when they have different needs.
- Find a way to let other members of the family know what is happening. You need to still respect the privacy and choice of the person who is at the centre of all of this, but you can find a way to keep other people involved.
- Accept that different people in the family may have different views about what is best.
- Try to make time for people to hear each other’s suggestions, and have time to reflect on them.

“I always knew it would be a compromise between what mum wanted and what was right for dad. The lists in the Hints helped get the balance between what each one needed.”

“Mum wants everything done yesterday and Dad likes to consider every option in endless detail. But as Dad pointed out, this happens each time they’ve moved house over the past 55 years and they’ve learned how to work things out.”

“My niece is very organised and put round weekly updates for everyone. Once we were at the stage of actually looking at houses, she added photos. That helped reassure folk who live a distance away.”

Look after yourself

You also want to make your own life as stress-free as possible.

- Think about practical steps that can help you have more time and energy to focus on helping the person you care about.

- It often helps if you have someone you can talk to while you are helping your relative in a big change in their life. You may want to use a friend who is not so closely involved to be your support and a sounding board for you over this period.

“The best help was from a friend who made me go for a walk with her each weekend. Good for helping me get my thoughts and feelings straight and the exercise and fresh air helped a lot.”

“A big step for me was to get set up for on-line shopping and tell myself that frozen and prepared food is ok, at least for a while. That way I wasn’t rushing to fit that in as well as going over to see mum more often.”

“Start with the idea of moving – whether this place and this house is still right, what could be better. The mistake we made was getting into too much detail too soon.”

“My advice to other families: Can you help by sometimes giving them a break from thinking about the move and not talking about houses?”

How you can help at each stage

There are Hints for older people for each stage of the process, from deciding whether to move right through to the practical arrangements on the day of the move.

You can read these and talk them through with your relative or friend at the time that is right for them.

Deciding whether to move house or stay

Sometimes people need to talk about all the options and aspects of a problem, to work out what they think and feel. Can you let the person talk about the question of whether they want to stay or move, even if it feels like you are hearing the same things on many occasions?

Try to be positive about the various options.

There is a checklist in that set of Hints and Tips. Can you help them work through that?

“The checklist is useful. It made my daughter realise ...

she was ready to move out, which wasn't what we expected (but very positive). But then my parents looked at it and decided to make changes to their house for now and plan to move somewhere smaller in a few years."

"Thinking about specifics, such as how much it costs to heat the house, made it easier because that was less emotional than saying: 'We're not coping'."

"Some of us at the Friday Club got to talking about moving after we had a talk from someone about making our homes safer."

Many people find that the support they get is as important as their house in staying well and having a good life. Talk to the GP or to support providers, to find out what areas they cover, and if they can help you find good support in a new area if needed.

"We were pretty stressed out when we realised that the support service mum got only covered the town. The Council helped us find new support workers, and mum gets on well with

them now, but getting that sorted was an added worry. My advice is to look at that early on."

"It was mini panic when I realised we would lose the Health Centre as my parents have relied on them a lot in recent years. We asked and they told us how to check what services are available in other areas. That's something family can check out because you are just talking about what the services do, not personal medical details."

Choosing the right house

Check what help your friend or relative wants – such as someone to look at possible places with them, or to talk it over afterwards.

Do they want to talk over their priorities in what they are looking for in a new house?

Can you help them check out ways to make any new house right for them such as advice about equipment, or getting support?

You may have moved house more recently than your relative or friend. Talking

through how you did it, and what the practical and legal arrangements are like these days, can be helpful.

“Mum’s mobility is really poor now. People to give lifts over to see a house or have a talk with the sheltered housing people are a big help. I think Mum liked the company as much as it being no hassle to get there. We had to juggle round getting time off work, so it was a big help when a few of her friends who had cars offer to help.”

Reducing what someone has

It can be a big help when someone else is there to sort through clothes, ornaments and the like. Can you help with that?

Can you help the person think of good homes for belongings that they no longer need, but don’t want to throw out?

Can you help with taking stuff away to charity shops, or the refuse place?

Can you listen when the person wants to talk about the memories items bring back?

“Big role for family here. Lots of people can all help with a few parts of it.”

“Remember it is ok if the person gets upset, or if you get upset. And enjoy the happy memories too.”

“We learned to work to people’s strengths. My sister in law and a couple of friends were more of a help at the clearing cupboards stage than my sister was. We got her to go with Mum to choose the curtains for the new house and they both loved that.”

Making the move

What can you do to help in the run up to the person moving?

What help do they need over the few weeks before and after, as well as on the day of the move?

Can you be with someone who may get confused or upset, or needs extra support, while other people are helping with the actual move?

“Let the person who is moving do as much as they want to, even if you think you could do it quicker or better. Just have someone who can help them and

switch off the bit of your brain that says ‘I could do this in half the time’.

“Neighbours were great at helping on the week of the move. That made it much easier for mum and for us.”

“Dad gets anxious when he can’t remember why things are happening. One of his friends stayed with him that day, took him out to their usual haunt for lunch, just reassured him.”

What to do if you are worried about someone

Sometimes the suggestion that someone moves house arises when people are worried about them not being able to look after themselves, or not being safe. But they may not see the situation that way. Or they may not realise that you are worried about them.

Plan how and when you can talk to your relative or friend about your concerns. Try to find a time when neither of you is too tired and you have enough time. List out what it is you are worried about before you talk to the person. Try to be specific and give examples of when something happened (or got missed) and why you were worried.

Think about what is going to keep the person safe and well and reassure you and other people who care about the person. Make a list of things that you think could help.

Try starting with suggesting solutions to one or 2 things if you have a long list. Often people find that reducing one problem makes it easier to deal with the others.

If you think your relative or friend needs support to manage and stay well

Falkirk Social Work team will tell you about services that the person may be entitled to receive.

www.falkirk.gov.uk/contact-us

Self-Directed Support Forth Valley is an independent charity that gives people advice and information about getting support.

sdsforthvalley.org

01324 508794

info@sdsforthvalley.org

Carers’ Centre has advice and information for people who care for a relative or friend.

www.centralcarers.org

01324 611510

centre@centralcarers.co.uk

More information

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 was a space for people aged 50 and older to get involved and have their say in community life.

Thank you to everyone who shared their ideas and experiences to help us make this guide!

Outside the Box website: www.otbds.org

Falkirk Council housing services website: www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property

outsidethebox



Make It Happen
Falkirk District
Forum



Falkirk Council

