

Shared Ownership Staircasing Procedure

Staircasing

At the moment, you share the ownership of your home with Plumlife. This leaflet will explain how you can buy more of your home, or own it outright... this is called 'staircasing'.

The price you pay for each share you want to buy will depend on the value of your home at that time.

Instead of increasing your share, you may just want to buy it outright, which means you will no longer pay any rent to Plumlife. However, if you live in an apartment, or a home with communal services (cleaning and maintenance), there will still be a service charge.

If you live in a house, you will normally be granted the freehold title on the property, but in certain circumstances, Plumlife may not be able to do this.

Please note: in solicitors' documents, Plumlife may sometimes be referred to under the name of its legal parent company, Great Places Housing Association.

What are the benefits of staircasing?

Most people dream of buying their own home, and you took the right steps towards that goal when you bought your home through the Shared Ownership scheme.

Buying more shares in your home has a number of benefits:

- You reduce the amount of rent you are paying to Plumlife, or stop paying altogether if you buy your home outright.
- When you decide to sell your home, the more shares you own, the more profit you will make if the value of your home has increased.

Procedure

1. You need to get an valuation on your home by a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). An estate agent, bank or building society valuation is not classed as an independent valuation and will not be accepted.

Here is a list of a few RICS accredited surveyors below:

Duxburys Surveyors

Telephone 01253 760 066 or email contact@duxburys-surveyors.co.uk. Areas covered: Fylde coast.

Aspins Chartered Surveyors

Email: julie@aspinandcompany.co.uk Tel: 0161 303 0958 areas covered Lancashire & Sheffield.

2. Complete and return the attached form, along with your valuation, to Plumlife, letting them know that you would like to buy more shares of your home, or buy it outright.
3. Once you have received a letter to acknowledge your application from Plumlife, you will need to appoint a solicitor to act on your behalf, and forward their details to Plumlife's solicitors, who inturn will appoint solicitors to act on Plumlife's behalf.
4. Both solicitors will speak to each other and complete the paperwork needed to buy the shares.

If you have any more queries about staircasing please speak to your solicitor.

Are you interested buying Plumlife's share in your home?

5. During this time, you will need to think about your mortgage requirements.
6. Both solicitors will speak to each other and complete the paperwork needed to buy the shares.

If you have any more queries about staircasing, please speak to your solicitor.

Repairs, maintenance and home improvement

Under the terms of your lease you need to keep your home to a good standard, this includes redecoration and service of boilers and plumbing to maintain the value of your home.

When you decide to buy more shares, if you have made substantial improvements, which are considered to be over and above the terms of your lease, the surveyor may consider what additional value these have added to your home.

For example, if you're fitting a new kitchen, bathroom, conservatory or extension, these may be considered as improvements that would add value to your home and may be taken into account in the purchase price.

When the surveyor visits your home, please make sure to let them know if you have taken on any improvements. If these are relevant to the value of your home, the surveyor should disregard them so they're not included in the price you would pay to staircase.

Any adjustments in price will be based on the value that improvements bring to the property. The surveyor will also calculate the loss in value should your home need essential repairs.

What are the costs involved in staircasing?

Every time you staircase you will need to bear in mind that there will be expenses you need to pay.

Before you decide to staircase, please investigate the fees involved. These could include:

Administration fee - £150 will be required by Plumlife on legal completion for processing a staircasing application.

Valuation fees - Required by Plumlife in accordance with your lease.

Legal expenses - Staircasing will involve changes to your existing lease, which will require the services of a solicitor. The solicitor will charge you for this service.

Mortgage fees - If you are applying to change lender (remortgage) to buy the additional share, or to get a better interest rate, you will need to pay the lender's valuation fee and possibly a mortgage arrangement fee. You may also have to pay penalty charges to your current lender if you re-mortgage before the end of a pre-agreed deal or product that ties you into a set timescale.

Rent and service charge arrears - If you are behind with your rent or service charges, you will need to bring these up to date so that the staircasing can be completed.

For more information, contact Plumlife on 0161 447 5050 or email resales@plumlife.co.uk

Intention to staircase

Please complete and return this form to Plumlife, 2A Derwent Avenue, Manchester, M21 7QP for the attention of the sales administrators.

Your name:

Email address:

Telephone number:

Property address and post code:

I have enclosed my valuation : YES/NO

I wish to purchase an additional share in the above property. I currently own ____% and wish to purchase an additional ____% share.

My solicitor's details are:

Signed (co-owner)