**Do I want to**

**‘Stay or Go’?**

**Is my home still right for me?**

**Hints & Tips**

This booklet is for anyone who is beginning to think about whether their home is still right for their circumstances. Whether you own or rent, it aims to help you with thinking and planning. It covers:

* Why you might want to think about moving home
* Checklist – is my home still right for me?
* Where to get advice and support

Older people’s experiences have informed this booklet.

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**

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

Remember, whatever stage you are at (thinking, planning or moving) you don’t need to do this on your own. There are people who will help you.

Think about what is important to you. Know what your priorities are. Make a list of things to ask or find out about – write 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.

Ask family and other people you know. Or 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.

Moving home can be difficult and daunting – plan ahead where possible.

If you are applying for rented housing, make sure that your application is kept up to date. Tell them about any changes in circumstances.

Get specialist advice & 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.”

**Why you might want to move home**

Your starting point is: “What you want your home to give you?” This is what most people want from their home:

* Being in a location that is near people they know –neighbours, friends, family and activities they enjoy.
* Being handy for services – shops, library and the like.
* Convenience for transport is also important for many.
* Having access to support & care services – including health, social services & voluntary organisations.
* A home that feels safe and is warm and comfortable – a place that works for you.
* A home that is easy to look after and maintain.
* Adequate space to meet your current and future needs.
* Outside space that is manageable and accessible for your current and future needs.

“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.”

“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.”



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| **Checklist – is my house still right for me?** |
| Aspect | My Assessment | Points to consider |
| Ok now | May change  | Change now |
| Location of the house |  |  |  | Check out your options. Look for areas with the type of house you will need.  |
| House size / room layout  |  |  |  |
| Upkeep |  |  |  | Can you get help? |
| Garden – easy to manage?  |  |  |  |  |
| Keeping warm, cost of fuel |  |  |  | Get advice on keeping bills low? |
| Keeping in touch with friends |  |  |  |  |
| Looking after yourself |  |  |  | Talk to your GP or others - what support is available? |
| Access to services |  |  |  | Buses, shops etc. |
| Ownership |  |  |  | Ask about options for owners |
| Your priorities |  |  |  |  |

**My notes**

(Use this space to write down your thoughts, views & advice)

Further information

**Highland Council - Housing Options Service**

Your local Housing Options Service provides free advice for anyone on all options for owners and renters, adapting your home, improving energy efficiency or moving. Telephone 01349 886602; visit a Service Point, or see www.highland.gov.uk

**Housing Options Scotland -** offer free support and advice for older adults, or anyone affected with mobility issues or other needs. They can advise on owning, renting and adaptations Phone 0131 247 1400. See www.housingoptionsscotland.org.uk

**Age Scotland -** are a source of free expert & impartial advice. They can help you to make an informed choice about your housing options in later life, whether this is staying or moving to somewhere which better suits your needs. Call the confidential helpline for free: 0800 12 44 222

**Care and Repair -** They provide practical assistance, financial and technical services, and advice to older, or disabled, people to help them to remain in their own homes in comfort. To find your local service, see: www.careandrepairscotland.co.uk

**Citizens Advice**

CABx are local, independent organisations providing free & confidential advice whoever you are and whatever your problem. Telephone: 0808 8009060 To find your local service, see: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland

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