



**Habinteg**  
Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd

# House Sales

## The Statutory House Sales Scheme

You may be able to buy your Habinteg home if you have at least five years tenancy, either with ourselves or a qualifying landlord. This may be achieved by a combination of different tenancies with various landlords.



## **Am I eligible to buy my home?**

You must be a secure tenant of 5 years, either with ourselves or a qualifying landlord. You can apply to purchase on your own, with your spouse or partner or with someone who has been living with you in the property for the last 12 months (two items of proof are required). Up to 4 people can apply to purchase.

Introductory tenants are not eligible to purchase until one year's tenancy is completed and secure tenancy status is granted.

If you have arrears on your rent account, we will still consider your request to purchase. However no sale can be completed until all arrears, whether for rent or any other payment due (e.g. Court Costs), have been cleared.

You will not be eligible if you are a squatter or if, due to anti-social behaviour, we are investigating a case or actively considering taking legal action for possession of your dwelling. Nor will you be eligible if we have served or are considering serving a Statutory Notice Seeking Possession in the past or forthcoming 3 months.

## **Which properties are included in the scheme?**

Most Habinteg properties are available for sale, with the exception of sheltered and supported housing and all one or two bedroom bungalows. These types of properties are excluded from the scheme because they are usually reserved for people who have disabilities or who are frail. As these properties are in demand and do not become available for letting very often, social landlords need to keep them in their housing stock. Larger bungalows - three, four and five bedroom bungalows are available for sale under the Scheme.

Tenants of apartments and maisonettes have similar rights to purchase as those living in houses though these properties are sold by way of a lease.

## **How is the purchase price determined?**

An independent Valuer will calculate what your property would currently sell for on the property market. Tenants' improvements will not be included in the valuation, although major improvements carried out by Habinteg will be taken into account.

A Valuer's fee of £120\* made payable to Habinteg Housing Association (Ulster) Ltd must be submitted along with the Application to Purchase and will be refunded if the sale completes. Market value will be assessed at the date on which we receive the completed form and valuation expenses. You will not be bound by any decision until a contract is signed.

If you are unhappy with the Valuer's assessment of market value, you may request to have the property revalued by the Land & Property Services. There is a fee of approximately £500\* for this service and it should be noted that on re-determination the valuation placed on a property can go up as well as down. Land & Property Services' final assessment is binding on the Association and the purchaser(s). There is no further Right of Appeal.

## **Is there Discount?**

You may be entitled to a discount which will be subtracted from the valuation. This discount is calculated on the length of time you have been a social housing tenant. If you are a secure tenant of a house who meets the five year tenancy qualifying criteria, the discount will be 20%, with an increase of 2% for each additional completed year of tenancy up to a maximum of 60%, subject to the Historic Cost rules and the discount ceiling of £24,000 - this is currently the maximum permitted discount, regardless of the number of years served as a secure tenant.

If you already purchased a dwelling under the House Sales Scheme previous discount received and not repaid will be added to the market value

## What other things should I consider?

- After purchase, you may still be liable to pay a weekly 'service charge' to cover the cost of additional services - Community Assistant, Communal facilities, communal works etc. If a lot of maintenance work is required to the communal areas, it can prove expensive and it's important you have funds available. Please check when enquiring.
- There may be 'historic costs' associated with the property - again, please ask when enquiring.
- Unless you pay for your property in cash you'll also have to pay monthly mortgage repayments. If you do not pay these you could lose your home. You may wish to take out insurance cover to ensure these will still be paid in the event of illness or job loss.
- All purchasers who receive discount from Habinteg must repay the full discount received if they resell their property within five years of the date of purchase (subject to conditions).
- You will also be liable to pay rates just as you do now within your rental charges.
- You will need to get buildings insurance, to protect you in case there is damage to the property itself either by fire, accident or natural causes.
- It is also advisable to get contents insurance to protect your belongings, if you don't have it already.
- Generally speaking housing benefit will no longer be available once you have purchased.
- After buying, you'll be responsible for all future repairs.

\*Costs given in this leaflet are correct at the time of publication in February 2017. These costs are subject to future change.

For further information, email [info@habinteg-ulster.co.uk](mailto:info@habinteg-ulster.co.uk) or call Holywood office: **028 9042 7211** North West office: **028 7136 0015**