

karbon
homes

Welcome home guide

Welcome to your home

We've pulled together all the most useful information you may need as a Karbon customer. This guide gives you an overview of your tenancy with us and helps make settling into your new home as easy as possible.

Within the guide, you'll find out what to do and who to turn to when you need help or advice on a whole range of matters. There's information on how to get involved with our work to improve your community. Plus, you'll learn some useful tips to make your home a very safe and happy one.

There's information about your tenancy and the wide range of services you can access, as well as general information about Karbon Homes.

To ensure your tenancy runs as smoothly as possible, you'll be allocated a housing officer who will support you throughout your time with us. They'll provide advice on specific matters relating to your tenancy or any questions you have in relation to this handbook.

For general enquiries our **Customer Relationship Team** will be your first point of contact.

It's easy to contact us

There are many ways to get in touch at a time that suits you best.

- **MyKarbon**

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon

Use to set up a direct debit, book and track repairs, check and pay your rent balance and update contact details. It's quick, easy and can be used anytime.

- **Phone 0808 164 0111**

8am – 6pm weekdays

We're here for repairs, rent payments and general enquiries. You can check your rent balance and make a payment anytime, without even speaking to an advisor. Just select the payment option and provide your tenancy number to use our automated service.

- **Out of hours service**

Available: 6pm – 8am weekdays plus weekends and bank holidays.

Automated rent payments, urgent repairs and other emergencies such as reports of anti-social behaviour.

- **Email info@karbonhomes.co.uk**

Email is perfect for cancelling appointments or for less urgent enquiries.

Facebook [@karbonhomes](https://www.facebook.com/karbonhomes)

- **Write to us at:**

Karbon Homes, PO Box 169, Blyth, NE24 9GZ

Leazes Homes, PO Box 170, Blyth, NE24 9HA

- **Visit us**

To see which of our offices are open to customers for drop-ins and which are appointment only, visit **www.karbonhomes.co.uk/contact**

About Karbon Homes

Karbon Homes is your landlord and is responsible for the day to day management of your home

Since our formation in 2017, we've focused on delivering our three strategic aims - to provide good quality homes, to deliver excellent service to our customers, and to shape strong, sustainable places for our communities.

Our footprint covers the North East of England and Yorkshire, with around 34,000 homes across diverse communities, all facing different opportunities and challenges.

Some customers just need an affordable home, or a way onto the property ladder. Others might need a bit more – financial advice, community services, sheltered accommodation or even training that can lead to a new job. Whatever people need to feel more secure, confident and happy with where they're at, we work hard to provide it.

We always make the effort to understand our customers. We believe that everyone deserves respect. Everyone's voices should be heard and everyone deserves someone in their corner now and then. We believe that by focusing on our three strategic aims, combining a sound business head with a strong social heart and staying true to our values, we can build strong foundations for even more people.

Improving services and building stronger foundations for more people

What you can expect from us

We'll listen to you and make sure our services are tailored to meet your individual requirements. We'll work with you to develop our services further.

We aim to provide the services you want at a time and place that suits you. We want to offer a menu of services that you can choose from and a range of convenient ways to contact us.

We also provide opportunities for customers to raise suggestions about how we can improve our services.

To demonstrate our commitment to excellent customer service at all times, we have developed our Customer Service Standards. They outline what you can expect from us. Through these standards we are committed to:

- Making sure you are actively involved in what we do and the decisions that affect you
- Supporting you during your tenancy
- Responding quickly if things go wrong
- Valuing the diversity of our customers, treating everyone fairly and with respect
- Providing clear and accurate information
- Being flexible in the way that we provide our services
- Building and maintaining our homes to a high standard

Our aim is to deliver all of this in a friendly, polite and respectful way.

Looking after your privacy

Why we collect information

We collect information from you to help us to:

- Collect rent and service charge payments
- Provide a repairs and maintenance service
- Manage complaints and support you in making a complaint if you need to
- Provide a welfare rights service
- Provide an anti-social behaviour service

We also collect satisfaction data to understand how we are doing and how we can improve. Acuity is our customer satisfaction partners and they conduct Customer Satisfaction surveys on our behalf.

How information about you will be used

We may use your information to:

- Carry out our lawful functions as your landlord
- Improve services based on your feedback
- Check with you that the information we have is accurate
- Compare it against other information to help combat fraud and crime
- Assess your entitlement to a benefit or an opportunity
- Check your identity when you contact us
- Contact you for operational services, such as a visit or a repair, gas inspection arrangement or a request to contact us.

We may share your information with:

- Other housing associations to help with property transfers
- The police and law enforcement agencies to prevent crime
- Other companies to prevent fraud and to pursue debtors
- We will keep your information safe and secure.

If you'd like to know more about how we manage and use the information you share with us please view our Privacy Statement found here on our website.

<https://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/privacy-statement/>

Alternative and accessible formats are available and can be requested by calling our Freephone number 0808 164 0111.

Moving in

To help you settle into your new home quickly and easily, here's a handy checklist of the things you need to do when you move in.

Your Karbon Homes officer will contact you a few weeks after you have moved in to arrange a new customer visit. It is important that you are available so they can answer any queries you may have and ensure your tenancy gets off to the best possible start.

Things I need to do

- Both your electric and gas (if applicable) supplies are provided by OVO energy. When you move in your gas supply may be disconnected for health and safety reasons. You should contact us and we will reconnect the gas supply and issue you with a certificate to confirm that the supply is safe to use. You can change your electricity and/or gas supplier at any time.
- We will tell you if your water charge is included in your rent or whether you have to pay it directly to the water company. If the water rates are not included in your rent, you should contact the water company to register with them.
- Make a note of where your stopcock is located.
- Pay your rent as soon as you receive your rent account number to avoid falling into arrears.
- Make a new claim for Council Tax Support or, if you're already claiming Council Tax Support, inform the Council of your change in address.
- Make a new claim for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (including the Housing Element of Universal Credit) or, if you're already claiming, inform the Council or Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of your change in address.
- We always recommend that you take out your own contents insurance to protect your own belongings against damage including fire and flood. We've arranged an easy and reasonably priced insurance scheme that you may want to consider, please contact the Customer Relationship Team for further details.
- You should contact your preferred telephone provider who will advise you how to get connected. If you had a telephone at your previous address, you may be able to take the same number.
- You should consider having your post redirected from your old address.
- Remember to tell others that you have moved, in particular your doctor, dentist, children's school, your employer, TV licensing, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and bank.

Need support?

Our Money Matters Team offers free, confidential advice on all things money related, including Universal Credit, benefits checks and budgeting, borrowing, debt and more.

To find out how we can support you, visit www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-area/my-money/, email info@karbonhomes.co.uk or call **0808 164 0111** and ask for the **'Money Matters Team'**.

Help with furnishing your home

If you feel like you may struggle to afford important items like a sofa, washing machine or cooker, there are services available that could assist in making your house feel like home.

Orange Box North East – is a furniture collections and distribution company based in Byker. They offer furniture items to individuals and families on low income.

Emmaus North East – supports local residents in South Shields and the surrounding communities offering affordable furniture and household items.

Community Transport – offer good quality low-cost furniture from their stores in Blyth, Byker and Blaydon.

CDFHS – based in County Durham, CDFHS provide thousands of furniture and household goods each year to the local community.

British Heart Foundation – offer an online shopping service for second hand furniture, homeware, clothing and accessories.

Karbon Homes Home Comforts – our furniture and appliance rental service offers three levels of packs of good quality furniture and appliances for an affordable weekly payment.

If you would like to find out more about these services, please speak to your housing or customer services officer.

Being safe

Going away

If you're going away from your home for a while, don't be tempted to put your bins out early, put them out as close to collection time as practicable – don't signal you're out to burglars.

- Don't leave keys under mats or notes saying you're out.
- Always lock windows and doors when you go out.
- Always ask callers for ID; if in doubt call their company to verify they are legitimate.

Condensation, damp and mould

There is nothing more important than the safety of you and your family.

Damp and mould can affect homes, particularly during the winter months.

Our top priority is always providing you with a safe and healthy home – and it's our responsibility to do so.

If you suspect you may have damp or a leak, please contact us straight away.

If you have excess condensation in your home, this can lead to problems such as mould growth, which can affect your health and the health of your home.

Take a look at the Healthy Homes section of this guide for top tips to prevent condensation.

Water safety

When it comes to water safety, turning taps off and supervising children when using the bath are what usually come to mind. But there are areas of water safety that we don't often think about, like legionella.

Legionella can be found in homes where water systems such as water tanks, taps and showers are unused. This allows bacteria to grow and develop in the water system.

Where water systems are used regularly the risk is very small. However, if you don't use your shower for a week or more, it is advisable to flush it through.

If there is a tap or shower in your home that you rarely use, make sure you run them at least every few days and stand well away from the running water.

The best method is to take the shower head down and place it in either a bucket or plastic bag. Fill the bucket or bag with water, this contains the spray and stops the droplets becoming airborne, then gently pour the water away. Cleaning the shower head with a bleach solution every three months is also advised.

If your system maintains stored hot water (as opposed to a Combi that heats it as it needs it), the thermostat should be set at 60c. Please do not turn it down.

If you're away from your home for an extended period, it is recommended you run all taps for five minutes to flush out the system.

To turn off your water

- Know where the stop tap is and make sure you can turn it
- Turn the main stop tap to the right (clockwise) if you want to shut off the water (e.g. to prevent water leaks)

If you ever have any concerns or questions, please **contact us**.

Electrical safety

We have an electrical safety policy that helps us manage electricity safety for all our customers.

We will inspect and test your electrical circuits (including fixed wiring and sockets) every five years. A copy of the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) for your home is available on request. Make sure you know where the consumer unit/fuse board is in your home. To switch off your electricity, simply turn the mains switch to the off position.

To ensure your home is safe:

- Do not overload sockets or wire more than one appliance into each plug
- Never touch switches or plugs with damp or wet hands
- Turn off and unplug all electrical appliances that are not in use (it will also save you money)

When using electrical appliances, always follow the manufacturer's instructions. If you ever have any concerns about the condition of the electrical system in your home, please **contact us**. You can download our electrical safety factsheet on our website.

Gas safety

Carbon monoxide is a colourless, odourless gas that can arise from the incomplete combustion of a fuel, generally due to an insufficient air supply. This can be gas, solid fuel, or oil.

The main way to stop this is to have your appliances regularly serviced and checked for safety, and that's why it's so important to allow us access to do this for you.

Also, never block vents or air bricks.

What are the signs or symptoms to watch out for that might indicate something is wrong?

- Yellow or orange rather than blue flames (other than with living flame effect fires which do display a yellow flame)
- Soot or yellow / brown staining around or on appliances
- Appliances that keep going out
- Increased condensation inside windows.

If you think your appliance has a problem, please **contact us** immediately.

If you suspect there are high levels of carbon monoxide in your home:

- Open all doors and windows
- Get everyone outside into fresh air
- Call the National Gas Emergency Service

If you smell gas, you should:

- Put out all flames, turn off the gas, and open windows so the gas can escape.
- Do not use matches, cigarettes or vapes or turn on any electrical switches.
- Leave your home immediately and call the National Gas Emergency Service free on 0800 111 999 (it's important to use a phone outside of your home as using a phone inside, even a mobile, could spark an explosion).
- If you are deaf or hearing impaired and have a Minicom or Textphone, you can call the gas emergency service on 0800 371 787. If you're a British Sign Language (BSL) user, you can use SignLive to contact the National Gas Emergency Service free of charge

Your responsibilities:

- Make sure air vents do not become blocked
- Allow us access to carry out the annual gas safety check in your home (see below)
- Report any gas appliance repairs to us without delay

Gas Safety checks

If your home has a gas supply, we will arrange for a Gas Safe registered engineer to carry out a gas safety inspection every 12 months – this is a legal requirement and failure to provide access is a breach of your tenancy

We will provide you with a copy of your annual gas safety check certificate within 28 days of your inspection

If your home has gas, solid fuel or oil, we have fitted a carbon monoxide detector. If this activates, please **contact us** immediately.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning

Early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can mimic many common illnesses and may easily be confused with food poisoning, viral infections, flu or tiredness.

Symptoms to look out for include:

- Headaches or dizziness
- Breathlessness
- Nausea
- Loss of consciousness
- Tiredness
- Pains in the chest or stomach
- Erratic behaviour
- Visual problems

If you or your family experience any of the above symptoms and believe you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide, you should seek urgent medical advice from either your GP or an A&E department. If you think your appliance is spilling carbon monoxide, please **contact us** immediately.

Switch off or put out the appliance. If it's a gas or oil appliance shut off the supply at the meter or control valve.

Open all doors and windows to ventilate the room.

Visit your GP and tell them that you believe you may have been exposed to carbon monoxide.

Fire safety

These simple, inexpensive tips can prevent fires in any home.

- We have fitted smoke detectors in your home - please test them regularly
- Take care when cooking. Don't start cooking if tired and don't leave a cooker unattended
- Plan an escape route and make a bedtime check
- Don't overload electrical sockets
- Don't smoke when you're tired or going to bed. Most cigarette related fires occur when falling asleep
- Use candles carefully. Again, if feeling tired, extinguish candles before falling asleep
- Keep all communal areas clear of objects
- Contact your Fire and Rescue Service for a home fire safety visit.

We have a robust fire safety and inspection process in place for all schemes where there is a shared internal communal area, such as an entrance lobby. We carry out regular inspections, including testing fire alarms, safety and detection equipment.

If you have any concerns about fire safety where you live, please contact us. The Fire Service also provides a range of great advice leaflets. Also, most, if not all fire and rescue services offer to carry out a free fire safety check of your home. You can book one by contacting your local fire and rescue service direct.

You can find out more information about fire safety on our website at

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-area/my-tenancy/home-safety/fire-safety.

Immersion heater safety

Immersion heaters are generally safe and reliable and have safety cut-outs to prevent them overheating, but how do you know if they develop a problem?

Typical warning signs include:

- Excessively hot water coming out of the hot water taps
- Excessive noise or 'bubbling' from the hot water cylinder
- Hot water coming out of certain cold water taps (some storage cisterns also feed cold water taps in the bathroom)
- Steam or moisture in the roof space

If you experience these signs, please switch off the immersion heater system and **contact Karbon Homes** immediately.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was once used extensively as a popular building material. However, it is now known that asbestos can be dangerous and long-term exposure can lead to serious diseases.

Asbestos was banned in the UK in 1999, so if your home was built after 2000 it should not be present. If your home is older than this, please don't worry as asbestos is only a risk if it is disturbed or damaged through the release of fibres into the air.

You can download our asbestos safety fact sheet on our website.

If you have any concerns at all about asbestos, please **contact us**.

Mobility scooters

We appreciate the benefit these can bring to people but the majority of Karbon Homes' properties were built before they existed and therefore are generally not designed to accommodate them. We do however, provide parking bays for mobility scooters in our sheltered schemes.

Communal parts of any building

Mobility scooters cannot be stored or charged in any communal corridor or stairwell in any circumstances.

Sheltered communal premises

If you are thinking of getting a mobility scooter please speak to your scheme officer first. We will endeavour to help find a safe location where it may be stored and charged but this may not prove possible.

Ideally, scooters should be kept in a garage or a secure shed rather than in the home.

If you live in a high rise building, a block of flats or a sheltered scheme there may be special fire procedures. You will be told about these when you move in and notices will be displayed throughout the building.

Balcony safety

Fire hazards on balconies range from smoking and carelessly discarded cigarettes, to using patio heaters, barbeques and storing combustible items. All these create a higher risk of fire.

What you are not allowed to do on your balcony:

You MUST not:

- Use a barbeque (falling embers from a BBQ can burn items on your balcony and others around you)
- Use a patio (outdoor) heater (gas or electric) or a flame pit
- Store gas cylinders (or any item containing flammable liquid)
- Use fireworks or indoor fireworks
- Install reed fencing or other combustible screening
- Dispose of a cigarette by flicking it over the side of the building

How to reduce the risk of fire on a balcony

Smoking and unsafe disposal of cigarettes;

If you smoke:

- Always fully extinguish cigarettes.
- Take care if smoking on a balcony and use an ashtray or bucket with water or sand in to dispose of cigarettes safely.

Storage of combustible and/or bulky items

- Do not store any (flammable) items on your balcony that might catch fire.
- You should keep items on your balcony to a minimum by removing any rubbish and combustible items like furniture, timber, decorating materials, children's plastic toys and other clutter. This helps to prevent flames spreading up the side of the building.
- Never use BBQs (including disposable ones) on your balcony. They pose a fire risk which could easily spread to other homes.
- If a fire breaks out on your balcony, it could spread much faster than a fire inside your building. Ideally, you should keep your balcony completely clear (although plants and a few items of patio furniture are OK).
- Do not store BBQ fuel (such as gas cylinders or starter fuel) or any other flammable substances on your balcony.
- Do not drop cigarettes over the side of your balcony - they could cause a fire on balconies below you. If you smoke on your balcony, use an ashtray and dispose of smoking materials as carefully as you would do indoors.
- White/electrical goods (such as fridges and tumble driers) must not be stored on balconies. They are not suitable for outdoor use and could start a fire.

Flood advice

What do I do if I receive a flood warning?

We can expect to see more extreme weather events such as flooding in the future due to our changing climate. Hopefully, you'll never need this information, but it's important to be prepared.

- Have torches, medications and waterproofs to hand
- Fill jugs and saucepans with clean water
- Move your family and pets upstairs or to a high place with a means of escape
- Turn off gas, electricity and water supplies when flood water is about to enter your home, if safe to do so
- Turn off any equipment that uses water (like washing machines and dishwashers)
- Do not on any account touch sources of electricity when standing in flood water
- Keep listening to local radio for updates or call the Environment Agency Floodline on 0345 988 1188
- Flood water can rise quickly; stay calm and reassure those around you. Call 999 if you are in danger

Flooding and insurance

If you rent your home, Karbon Homes is responsible for most flood repairs.

However, we're not normally responsible for replacing or repairing any of your personal belongings that are damaged, including furniture.

It's very important that you have your own contents insurance to protect your belongings.

We make it easy for you to insure your belongings under a special low cost household contents insurance scheme. If you would like further information about this, please contact our Customer Relationship Team and we'll send you a leaflet about it.

What do I do if my home is flooded?

1. Contact Karbon Homes

Contact our **Customer Relationship Team** and tell us:

- What has happened?
- What damage has been caused?
- What if anything, you have done to try to repair the situation?
- Whether the damage has affected neighbouring properties
- Whether the property is habitable

2. Contact your contents insurance company

Most companies have a 24-hour helpline you can call. The staff will tell you what you need to do to make a claim following flooding.

3. Clean up

Karbon Homes will help clean up your home. We're responsible for most flood repairs to the building.

Before you start cleaning up, take photographs of the flood damage on your wall.

Make a list of what has been damaged and keep it somewhere safe. This helps with your contents insurance claim.

Don't throw away flood-damaged furniture, carpets and other belongings until your insurance company tells you it's okay to do this.

Recover your valuables and keepsakes and put them somewhere safe. Use rubber gloves when you are handling them and put them in bags or boxes in a safe place. Most articles can be professionally restored so do not make rash decisions.

Flooding can contain pollutants which can affect the health and wellbeing of a person coming into contact with them. Combat this by applying basic hygiene precautions, including:

- Washing hands after exposure
- Decontaminating footwear by washing and treating with mild disinfectant
- Keeping children and pets out of the contaminated area

Your tenancy and your rights

Your rights and responsibilities form part of your Tenancy Agreement and it's important that you read this separate document and talk to your Karbon Homes officer about anything you don't understand.

This section of the guide is intended to help you understand your rights and explain some of them in more detail. Many are subject to certain conditions and formal procedures which are too detailed to set out in this welcome guide. If you are unsure of your rights, please contact us and we can explain them further.

What is a Starter Tenancy?

A Starter Tenancy is an Assured Shorthold Tenancy which will last for 12 months from the date your tenancy begins. During this period, Karbon Homes will keep your tenancy under review.

If you do not break any tenancy conditions during this time, you will automatically become an Assured Tenant. There will be no need to sign a new agreement.

All tenants have in their tenancy agreement the following rights:

Your right to occupy

You have the right to occupy your home without interruption or interference from us for the duration of this tenancy (except for the obligation contained in this tenancy agreement to give access to our employees or contractors).

Your right of security of tenure

You have the right to occupy your home, and your tenancy can only be ended by us if one or more of the conditions shown in your tenancy agreement is broken or if you no longer occupy the property as your only or principal home. We can only end your starter tenancy by serving of a Section 21 notice, or if you are an assured tenant, we must obtain a court order.

Your right to repair

If we do not carry out repairs within an agreed timescale and fail to do so after a second request is made, then in certain circumstances you have the right to organise your own repairs and receive compensation from us. There are specific conditions attached to this right that our Customer Relationship Team can explain.

Your right to consultation

You're entitled to be consulted about changes that affect you and your home. Our section 'getting involved' explains how we consult with customers, but we encourage feedback about the services we deliver to help us to understand what we are doing right but more importantly, how we can do things better. Occasionally, we may ask for your feedback by completing a short survey about a particular service.

Your right to information

You have the right to information about the terms of your tenancy agreement, our policies and procedures including housing allocation, transfers, tenant consultation, our repairs obligations and our performance as a landlord.

Your right to make a complaint

If you're not satisfied with the service you receive from us then you have the right to make a complaint. If after going through our complaint process you're still not satisfied, then you have the right to refer your complaint to the independent Housing Ombudsman Service. Further details are given in the 'compliments, complaints and comments' section.

As an Assured Tenant, you have additional rights as follows:

Your right to exchange

You have the right to exchange properties with a secure tenant from a local authority or another assured housing association tenant. You must have our permission before proceeding with the exchange.

Your right to succession

If a tenant passes away, you might be able to take over their tenancy – but only if you meet certain conditions. For example, you'll usually need to be a close family member and have lived in the property with them.

To find out more, contact your housing officer. They can give you a copy of our succession policy which explains everything in detail.

Your right to acquire

You may have the right to acquire your home. Not all properties can be purchased under this scheme. For more information, please contact your Housing Officer who can put you in touch with a member of our team who can help you.

Your rent

The money you pay for your rent covers the cost of your home and the wide range of services we provide.

How your rent is set

Rent for all housing associations is decided based on laws and rules from the government and housing regulator. If your rent changes in the future, it'll follow these rules and limits set by the government.

If you're a shared owner, your rent is based on what's written in your lease.

Besides rent, you might pay a service charge for things like cleaning shared areas, maintaining the grounds, and lighting or laundry in communal spaces. Everyone who benefits from these services shares the cost equally, and you'll get a breakdown that shows what you're paying for.

How to pay your rent

Your rent is due each week as stated in your tenancy agreement unless you have made an arrangement with us to pay fortnightly, four weekly or monthly in advance.

We've made it as simple as possible for you to pay your rent. Here are the best ways to do this:

MyKarbon

With your debit card via your **MyKarbon account**.

Telephone

Call our freephone number **0808 164 0111** and use our 24 hour automated payment line. You'll need your tenancy reference number when you call.

Direct Debit

We can collect your payments weekly, fortnightly, four weekly or monthly on any day that is convenient for you. You can call us to set this up for you, or you can set it up yourself on your **MyKarbon account**.

Post Office or Pay Point outlet

You will need your allpay swipe card to use this service. Please contact us if you need a replacement card.

Help in paying your rent

You may be entitled to Universal Credit or Housing Benefit to cover all or part of your rent. If benefit is not paid or it does not cover all of your rent, it is up to you to pay the difference. If you receive benefits towards your housing costs directly, you should always use that money to pay your rent.

You should make a claim as soon as possible. Delaying may result in you losing benefit. Benefit will not usually be paid before you move into your home and make a claim, and delaying could put you into arrears.

If you're unsure if you are entitled to benefits or need help with making an application, please contact us and we'll be happy to help.

Universal Credit is paid directly to you, including the money towards your rent. If you are making a claim for Universal Credit and think you will have difficulty in paying your rent to us every month, please contact us straight away to discuss your options.

You should always advise the Department of Work and Pensions or Housing Benefit of any change in your circumstances.

Council Tax Support is not included in Universal Credit. You will still need to apply to your Local Authority for this separately if you are on Universal Credit.

If you get into arrears

We understand that there may be times in your life when it is difficult to pay your rent. If this happens, please contact our **Customer Accounts Team** straight away - we are here to help.

In most cases, we will be able to help you. By taking early action you may be able to avoid court proceedings and extra costs. If you cannot pay the whole amount at once, we'll work with you to agree an affordable repayment plan. We can also put you in contact with our **Money Matters Team** for free advice on subjects like benefits and budgeting.

Please remember - Not paying in full and on time will put your home at risk. If you are behind with your rent and fail to keep up with your payments, we may take legal action to recover the money you owe us. It's important that you contact us if you are finding it difficult to pay your rent.

Benefits and money advice

Karbon Homes has a dedicated Money Matters Team who can offer free and confidential advice to all tenants about benefits and tax credits. They can also give you advice on cheaper ways to borrow money and effectively manage your debts.

The team can:

- Increase your income by making sure you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to
- Help you to fill in complex benefit application forms and advise you on how to manage your benefit claim online
- Help you challenge and appeal incorrect benefit decisions
- Give specialist debt advice
- Help you to manage changes in your circumstances, such as ending or starting work, sickness, births or bereavements
- Give advice on alternatives to pay day loans and doorstep lenders
- Give advice on opening a bank account or saving and borrowing with your local credit union
- Give help and advice on the best ways of managing and paying your rent or other bills
- Keep you up to date with all the changes to the benefits system
- Look at ways to help you with energy efficiency service and getting the best deal

If you are struggling to pay your rent or any other bills, or you would like some benefits advice, our team will be happy to talk to you in confidence.

You can contact them via our **Customer Relationship Team**.

Repairs

This section is designed to guide you through any repairs needed for your home. Your tenancy agreement outlines our repair responsibilities.

It explains who is responsible for which type of repair.

If you need a repair to your property, the first thing you should do is check whether the repair is something we can do for you, or whether you need to do it yourself.

Our responsibility for repairs to your home

We are responsible for keeping the structure and exterior of your home in repair, including:

- Drains, gutters and external pipes
- The roof
- Outside walls, outside doors, windowsills, window catches, sash cords and window frames including necessary external painting and decorating
- Internal walls, floors and ceilings, doors and door frames, door hinges and skirting boards but not including internal painting and decoration
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues – this doesn't include sweeping
- Pathways, steps or other means of access
- Plasterwork
- Integral garages and stores
- Boundary walls and fences

Repair of installations

To keep in repair and proper working order any installation provided by us for space heating, water heating, sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

- Basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and water pipes
- Electric wiring, including sockets and switches, gas pipes and water pipes
- Water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating installations

If you damage something that we would normally fix, we can repair it and charge you for a reasonable repair cost.

Please note that we're only responsible for water, electric and gas supply inside the property (after the meter or stopcock).

Your responsibility for repairs

If you're suffering from ill health, are vulnerable or disabled and have nobody to help you, we may be able to do some of this work for you for a charge. For more information contact our **Customer Relationship Team**.

You can find out more about reporting repairs at www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-area/my-repairs/.

How to report a repair

Repairs to your home can be reported by telephone, text, email, calling into or writing to our offices.

When you contact us, please make sure you have the following information:

- As much detail about the problem as possible.
- Times when there will be someone at home (am or pm).

If we need to work inside your home, you will need to ensure that a responsible adult is there to let us in and to stay while the work is completed.

You will know that your repair has been recorded because you will either receive a letter, email or text telling you when the work will be completed. Alternatively, you will be contacted to arrange for an inspection to be done.

Emergency repairs when our offices are closed

You can report an emergency repair by telephone at any time of the day and night.

Our Customer Relationship Team number will direct you to the emergency repairs service.

Please only use the emergency service if your request really is an emergency.

The emergency repairs team will ask questions to check if your call is an emergency or not. All calls to this service are recorded. If a tradesperson attends for what turns out to be a non-emergency, you may be asked to pay the cost of their visit. Repairs carried out as an emergency cost a lot more than daytime repairs.

If you use the emergency service because you are locked out of your home, you'll be charged a fee. The cost of the locksmith's visit will be passed to you and this is likely to be more than £100. You must look after keys and should let someone you trust have a spare key in case you lose yours.

How long will it take for your repair to be done?

When you report a repair, you'll be given a date by which it will be completed and informed who will carry out the work. If possible, we'll arrange a convenient appointment for the work to be carried out.

The time allowed will depend on the nature and seriousness of the problem.

If you're suffering from ill health, are vulnerable or disabled and the repair is relevant to your circumstances we'll make every effort to help you by undertaking the repair more quickly than our published timescales.

The right to repair

Some important repairs are covered by the Right to Repair rules. If we don't finish them on time, you can ask us to hire another contractor. If that contractor also doesn't finish the job, you may get compensation. Contact us to find out which repairs are covered and how long they should take.

Repairs we can charge you for

If you or anyone in your home causes damage, deliberately or through neglect, you must report this to us as soon as possible. We expect you to arrange for the damage to be repaired, at your own cost, to our satisfaction and within a reasonable time.

Alternatively, we will repair the damage and you will have to pay for the cost of the work.

Examples of work which we may charge you for, which we call rechargeable repairs, are:

- Damaged sinks or toilets
- Damaged windows or doors and broken glass
- Floods from washing machines
- Changing locks due to lost keys

If you do the repairs yourself, or pay anyone else to do the work, but it does not meet our standards, we will have to carry out work to put this right and charge you for the cost of this work. Normally, we will invoice you for anything that you have to pay for shortly after you ask us to do the work, or, as quickly as possible after we have done the work.

If damage is caused by a break-in or vandalism, we'll carry out work to make your home safe. We'll not charge you anything for this work if you have told us about this kind of damage as quickly as possible and provide us with a crime or incident number to show that it has been reported to the police.

You can view the common costs for repairs at www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-area/my-repairs/our-repair-charges.

Regular maintenance

We'll carry out servicing and cyclical maintenance on a regular basis to keep your home in a good state of repair.

Every year we'll service and safety check gas, oil and solid fuel systems and appliance, lifts and fire alarms.

Gas servicing

Under the Gas Safety regulations 1998, all landlords must make sure that gas appliances are serviced each year and gas carrying pipework is safety checked.

We're responsible for the following:

- Making sure gas appliances and flues are maintained in a safe condition.
- Making sure yearly maintenance and safety checks are carried out on or before the 12 month anniversary of the last gas service.
- Making sure we keep a record and issue these to other tenants.
- Making sure all safety checks are carried out by a Gas Safe registered installer.
- Faulty gas appliances which are not regularly maintained can become dangerous and can give off carbon monoxide.
- You cannot see, taste or smell this gas, but it can kill.
- There are about 30 deaths a year due to carbon monoxide poisoning from gas appliances.
- For your own safety, you should not sleep in a room containing an open flue gas or solid fuel appliance (such as a wood burning stove, open fireplaces or charcoal grills).
- If in doubt, please contact us and a member of our Gas Team will be able to give you further advice.
- If you fail to keep appointments for servicing, we will take legal action to access your home.
- You must allow us into your home to carry out the annual gas safety check and any other necessary safety checks to protect you and your family.

For more information about gas servicing, please contact our Customer Relationship Team.

Other safety checks

We also carry out other checks to ensure the safety of you and your neighbours. These include electrical testing and fire door surveys (communal blocks). You must provide us with access to undertake these checks. If you don't you may be breaching your tenancy agreement with us.

Improvements to your home

Before you undertake any improvements or alterations to your home you must write to us asking for permission.

You must seek permission also before putting up a satellite receiver. You must not start any alterations until you have received a letter from us saying you can go ahead.

We'll normally allow most alterations and we may be able to help by providing you with some guidance on how to do it.

If you've carried out certain improvements, you will have the right to claim compensation when you leave your home provided that you obtained written permission to carry out those improvements in the first place. Please **contact us** for further details.

We will carry out planned programmes of work to replace or renew major items in your home such as kitchens and windows as they come to the end of their expected, useful life. We will take account of your wishes and wherever practical offer you a choice of replacement item from our approved list.

Healthy Homes

All homes are at risk of condensation, particularly through the winter months. Excess condensation in your home can lead to problems such as mould growth, which can affect your health and the health of your home. Small amounts of condensation are not usually a problem, and there are some everyday things we can all do to help prevent it.

As your landlord, it's our responsibility to provide you with a safe and healthy home. If you spot any damp or mould in your home and following these tips does not help reduce excess condensation, let us know straight away.

We'll arrange an inspection to identify the cause of any issues you are experiencing and work together to ensure any risks, hazards or problems are resolved as a priority.

Top Tips

The best way to prevent condensation is to reduce the amount of moisture produced in your home and keep it as warm and ventilated as possible.

- Opening windows when cooking, showering, bathing and drying clothes helps moist air escape.
- Turning your extractor fan on when cooking, showering and bathing removes excess moisture from the air.
- If you can, setting your thermostat to the lowest comfortable temperature (between 18 - 21 degrees Celsius) will help to keep you and your home healthy while keeping your energy bills down.
- If you have access, drying clothes outside reduces moisture in your home. When using a drying rack indoors, opening a window slightly or turning on your extractor fan helps reduce condensation.
- Putting lids on pans when cooking prevents excess moisture in the air (and helps save on your energy bill).
- Keeping your home heated where possible helps to prevent condensation from forming on walls, floors and ceilings.
- Moving sofas and furniture away from radiators or heaters helps heat travel more effectively around rooms in your home.
- If you spot condensation on a surface, wipe it down with a dry clean cloth or towel.
- Twisting radiator valves higher in rooms you want warmer and lower in rooms you don't use. This often helps to save on energy and keep your home healthy.
- Closing internal doors and using draught excluders keeps heat in the rooms you use the most often, reducing the amount of heat moving into colder areas of your home.

Other heating devices

Storage heaters

If your home has a storage heater, be familiar with your controls to stay warm and improve energy efficiency. 'Input' controls how much electricity is stored as heat. 'Output' controls how quickly that heat is released the following day.

In colder weather, turning 'input' up will store more heat. If you're home and want more heat, you can set the 'output' higher. Turn 'output' lower while you're asleep or out of the home to keep energy bills down. Remember, you need to set the 'input' today for the heat you need tomorrow.

Heat pumps

If your home has a heat pump, it will usually be designed to only come on when your home gets cold. You can control how warm you'd like your home to be by using your thermostat. You don't need to worry about timing it to go off when you're out.

Help with your energy bills

If you're struggling to pay your energy bills, speak to your energy provider to find out about any help they might be able to give.

If you need any further advice or support, **please contact us.**

Your neighbourhood

We expect all customers to treat each other with respect and consideration at all times.

Your tenancy agreement outlines your responsibilities to be a good neighbour. We also need you to take responsibility for the behaviour of those people living with you and visiting you so we can make sure your neighbourhood is always a peaceful and welcoming place.

We take anti-social behaviour very seriously and have a duty to tackle it and protect you.

What is anti-social behaviour

This is any unreasonable behaviour which causes offence or fear to others and can include but is not limited to:

- Loud noise or music (i.e. parties, loud radio or television)
- Criminal behaviour or using your home for illegal or immoral purposes
- Violence
- Harassment
- Domestic abuse

Karbon Homes does not classify the following as anti-social behaviour:

- People mowing their lawn at a reasonable time of the day
- People using their vacuum or washing machine at a reasonable time of day
- People carrying out DIY at a reasonable time of day
- Noise from a child or children playing in, or near their home
- Impact noises caused by tenants in neighbouring properties, i.e. footsteps, chairs scraping or dropped items on the floor

These examples could become a concern if occurring regularly late at night or early in the morning.

Hate crime and harassment

Hate crime and harassment are severe forms of anti-social behaviour and ones we will not tolerate. Examples of this type of behaviour include:

- Hate behaviour against certain people or groups because of their age, race, disability, gender, religious beliefs or sexuality
- Using threatening and abusive language
- Stalking
- Damaging or threatening to damage another person's property

What to do if you are experiencing anti-social behaviour

Contact us as soon as possible after the incident and tell us what happened. We have dedicated officers whose job it is to tackle any anti-social behaviour and they will treat all reports or concerns in the strictest confidence.

We also work with a number of different agencies depending on the nature of the problem, including the police and other specialist support services.

We operate an out of hours anti-social behaviour reporting service. This means you can report an incident when our office is closed by calling our freephone Customer Relationship number on 0808 164 0111.

How we can help

We'll work with you and support you throughout the process, We'll agree any proposed action with you. In most cases we will:

- Agree an action plan with you and monitor the case closely
- Write to and visit those involved
- Issue incident report sheets and ask you to keep a record of events as they happen
- Keep in regular contact with you
- If a problem persists or becomes more serious we'll consider taking more serious action
- We will, as part of any investigation, consider the type of action we'll take against a perpetrator of anti-social behaviour

Any action taken will be reasonable and proportionate; this can be both non legal and legal actions ranging from a tenancy warning to civil court action.

Domestic abuse

We'll deal with any reports of domestic abuse promptly and sensitively and will call on the support of the various agencies we work with who have expertise in this field.

We can help with finding secure accommodation and can put you in touch with a number of agencies who are skilled in helping and supporting you.

We'll look to offer, where appropriate and safe to do so, additional security measures for you to remain safely in your home.

How you can be a good neighbour

- Be considerate to your neighbours – try and keep the noise at a reasonable volume at all times
- Do any building work or other noisy work during reasonable hours in the day
- Please ensure you are responsible for all pets
- Keep an eye on elderly or vulnerable neighbours. If you suspect they are being harassed and they may be too afraid to tell us, please report it on their behalf. We'll deal with this diplomatically and sensitively

Get involved with Karbon

Did you know there are many ways you can have your say on what happens at Karbon?

Our customer engagement groups and forums make sure we can keep your voice at the heart of our decision making, shaping services and implementing change. It helps build a strong relationship between us.

It creates opportunities to have open and constructive discussions about how and why we do things at Karbon. We can also discuss how you feel about the business and what issues matter to you.

Here are all the different ways you can get involved with Karbon:

Karbon Residents Committee

Make sure we're focusing on issues that matter to you, provide valuable and independent customer feedback and provide recommendations on how we can make things better.

Complaints Review Panel

Here at Karbon, our aim is to give you the service you expect. The Complaints Review Panel helps us to do this by reviewing how we're responding to customer feedback and assisting customers who need support in making a complaint.

Area Forums

Give all customers the opportunity to become involved in learning about our performance and services in their local area. We also invite partners and groups working within communities to join us for these meetings.

Scrutiny Bank

Checks and challenges our services, reports findings and suggests positive ideas for improvement.

Sheltered Housing Forums

Helps us to understand and explore the issues which effect residents living in our older person's accommodation and work with them to make improvements.

Grants Panel

Works with our Community Investment Team to review grant applications via our Community Fund, which supports projects that make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing within the communities you live in.

Environment Group

Address how we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, embed sound environmental practices and make a cleaner more sustainable environment for current and future generations

Customer Readers Panel

Reviews the most up to date housing policies and works with us to ensure our policies and practices are of a good standard.

Procurement Panel

Review our suppliers, services and materials, making sure they are of a high quality and purchased fairly.

Get in touch

If you'd like to find out more about joining any of our customer engagement groups, please get in touch. Contact us at **connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk**.

If you would like to get involved and help us to deliver services we can all be proud of, then we would love to hear from you.

We know that involving people who receive services is a proven and sound way to refine, rethink or be more efficient in how we deliver our services.

Surveying our customers

We work with market research agencies to find out more about what you think about us as a landlord and the services we provide you.

We work closely with a market research agency called Acuity. They carry out the majority of our customer feedback surveys on our behalf.

Acuity may call you from time to time to ask for your feedback about services you may have used as a Karbon Homes customer.

They will always explain who they are when they call, and they will ask if you are willing to complete the survey. Of course, if you don't wish to take part then we completely understand, just let them know. Also, they will never ask you any personal questions relating to your finances. The telephone number that Acuity will call from will be 0191 821 0011.

Acuity is a member of the Market Research Society, so they are bound under a strict code of conduct.

Find out more at **www.karbonhomes.co.uk/surveying-our-customers**.

Extra support

We provide a range of supported housing options including supported living, and specialist supported housing for older people.

Other examples of these include:

- Supported accommodation for people with mental health problems.
- Supported accommodation for young people.
- Supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

Support is provided either directly by our support staff, or by one of the many support providers we work in partnership with.

If you think you could benefit from further support, or you wish to know more about any of these services, please contact your Housing Officer.

Extra support for older people

At Karbon Homes, we have a specialist team to support our older customers.

- We provide bungalows across the North East specially designed for the over 60's with a range of services to help you stay independent.
- If you need adaptations to help you be more mobile and independent we can quickly provide help with small things such as grab rails and lever taps.
- We can also arrange major adaptations such as level access showers, stair lifts and access ramps following an assessment from an Occupational Therapist.

Our independent living and sheltered housing schemes offer you self-contained apartments with communal areas for socialising and the security of door entry and 24/7 emergency alarm.

Each has their own scheme officer to provide the support and advice you need to live an independent life at the heart of your community.

Silver Talk

Our free telephone befriending service, Silver Talk gives people the opportunity to connect for regular, social telephone chats. The service is for customers aged 50 and over who get a call from our friendly, fully trained volunteers for an up to 30-minute chat at the same time each week.

Silver Talk is ideal for those who:

- May feel lonely at times.
- Can communicate over the phone.

We also run Silver Friends, a community group hosting events and activities for people aged 50+.

If you're interested in joining us and want to find out more, please call 0191 223 8662 or email silvertalk@karbonhomes.co.uk.

Community funding

Our community connectors can help you access our Community Investment Fund. We welcome applications from not-for-profit and voluntary organisations as well as local schools.

The grants aim to support projects that make a real difference to people's lives and wellbeing within the communities in which we work.

We welcome applications if your project falls under one of our key themes:

- Cost of Living
- Bringing people together to create strong relationships within communities
- Health and wellbeing
- Improving places

Find out more at www.karbonhomes.co.uk/my-community.

Compliments, complaints and suggestions

We work hard to give you a brilliant service.

But we know that sometimes things do go wrong. If you feel like our service hasn't been up to scratch, please let us know.

We value your feedback and use any complaints, compliments and suggestions you give us to see where we can improve our services.

What is a compliment?

A compliment is when you tell us you are happy with our service. For example, if:

- You receive a good or excellent quality of service
- You want to praise or highlight the service given to you by a particular member of staff

What is a suggestion?

You may have an idea or suggestion about a service we offer, which could help us to improve it. For example, if:

- You have views on how we might make our service more accessible
- You believe that a service we offer could be improved

What is a complaint?

You have the right to make a complaint if you are not satisfied with the service we have provided. For example, if:

- We do not deliver a service on time
- We give you the wrong information
- You receive a poor quality of service
- You have a complaint about a particular member of staff

What is not treated as a complaint?

- A standard request for a service
- The issue giving rise to the complaint occurred over twelve months ago
- Legal proceedings have started. This is defined as details of the claim, such as the Claim Form and Particulars of Claim, having been filed at court
- Issues that have previously been considered under the complaints policy
- Concerns regarding annual rent and service charge increases, which must be escalated through the First Tier Tribunal
- Services not within our control e.g. Utility Companies, Local Authorities
- Complaints about our money advice service

- Concerns about how we have dealt with Data Protection Rights (these should be managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy by our Supervisory Body the ICO)
- Concerns about actions taken in relation to the Unacceptable Customer Behaviour Policy, which has its own appeal process.
- Reports of issues covered in the Anti-social Behaviour Policy
- Reports of issues covered in the Hate Crime and Harassment Policy

How your complaint is handled

We have a process for handling any complaints. It follows guidance from the Housing Ombudsman Service.

You can find out more information about our complaints service at **www.karbonhomes.co.uk/complaints**.

Our complaints process has two-stages:

Stage one

At stage one:

- We'll aim to acknowledge your complaint within five working days of receipt
- From acknowledging your complaint, we'll aim to investigate and respond to your concerns in writing within ten working days

Stage two

If you are not happy with the response to a complaint, you can ask for it to be reviewed at the next stage (stage two).

At stage two:

- We'll aim to acknowledge your complaint within five working days of you letting us know you'd like us to escalate it
- From acknowledging your complaint, we'll aim to investigate and respond to your concerns in writing within twenty working days

If we need more time to investigate and respond at either stage, we'll let you know as soon as possible in writing

At any point, you can refer your concerns to the Housing Ombudsman Service. You can find out more about the Housing Ombudsman Service and the support they offer at www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk.

How to make a complaint, or let us know about a compliment or suggestion

Telephone

Call us on 0808 164 0111, between 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday

Email

You can contact us via email at info@karbomhomes.co.uk

Live chat

By live chat into our Customer Relationship Team

In writing

To our Head Office address: Number Five, Gosforth Park Avenue,
Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8EG

Our colleagues

With any Karbon colleague, who will pass this to the appropriate person.

Direct messaging

Via Karbon's Facebook page using Facebook Messenger

Third party

Via a Councillor, MP or other relevant third party (e.g., Housing Ombudsman or consumer rights organisation) or advocate

Being green

We're all aware that we need to be kinder to the environment to minimise climate change and to protect this planet for future generations.

You can play a big part too by making the area you live a greener and more pleasant place to be.

It only requires one small change to make a big difference.

Listed below are some handy tips to help you save energy and money.

In your home

- Turning down your thermostat if it is set too high could save between £85-£90 a year on heating bills. If you're going away during winter, leave it on a low setting to prevent freezing.
- On average replacing an old fridge freezer with an A+ rated model will save you around £57 in energy bills over the lifetime of the fridge freezer.
- Taking a five minute shower, instead of a bath uses less water, and can save around £15 a year on energy bills.
- Turning off your lights when you don't need them could save you around £15 a year.
- Turning off appliances such as TVs, computers and games consoles, rather than leaving them on standby will save you around £30 a year.
- Only filling the kettle up with as much water as you need could save you around £7 a year.
- Dry clothes for free outside or on a clothes horse, instead of using electricity with a tumble dryer.
- Filling your washer or dryer up whenever possible or using the half load or the economical programme, if your machine has one, saves a significant amount of energy. Use 'low machine' to 30°C whenever you can.
- Consider getting a water butt for your garden – this is a great money saving way to collect rainwater that can be reused to keep plants watered or clean household or outdoor equipment.

In your diet

- A lot of greenhouse emissions come from meat production in the food industry. By reducing the amount of meat and dairy we eat and adding more plant-based foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains into our diet, we can significantly lower our carbon footprint.
- When you're making dinner avoid throwing out items that can be reused such as containers.
- You can make a compost bin and use it for items such as fruit and vegetable scraps, tea bags, coffee grounds and paper filters and grass clippings.

In your rubbish

- Recycle materials such as paper, glass and metal – recycling reduces the need for raw materials, energy and landfill space, which then helps lower carbon emissions.
- Many supermarkets now take soft plastics (such as crisp packets) and batteries that you can't put in your recycling bin at home. These recycling bins are often found near the shop's entrance.
- If you have unwanted items, such as furniture, that could still be used by someone else, there are some great ways you can donate them to give them a new lease of life and create space in your home. Organisations such as the British Heart Foundation offer free collection appointments for bulky items.
- All local authorities offer some form of bulky waste collections. Depending on where you live will depend on the service they provide. Some offer free collections whereas others will charge per item or per group of items. Head to your local authority's website to see what service they can provide you.
- Be careful. There are businesses that offer to take your bulkier items away for a cost. Whilst some are legitimate and will dispose of your waste correctly, some don't and will dump it illegally. This is known as fly-tipping and you may face action against you and even a fine. Don't let your good intentions get you into trouble.

Out and about

- Whenever possible, opt for things like walking, biking, carpooling or using public transport such as a bus or train which create lower carbon emissions than driving alone.
- Public transport plays an important part in keeping our planet healthy. It offers a more efficient way to transport passengers and, the more people who use it, the fewer vehicles there are on the road creating emissions. **Traveline North East** offers complete, impartial information about all public transport services including bus, train, Metro and ferry. They cover journeys anywhere in North East England, plus travel anywhere in the UK on the national rail and coach networks
- If you're interested in cycling and need some inspiration and information on where to go - Sustrans have a wide range of cycle routes that you can download by visiting **www.sustrans.org.uk**.

In your shopping

- If you're heading to the shops to pick up something for dinner, remember to bring your reusable bags – 160,000 plastic bags are consumed a second, and can cause pollution, even ending up in the ocean and killing wildlife.
- Sustainable shopping – buying pre-owned clothes and furniture is an easy way to lower our carbon footprint and save money. We can also donate our own clothes and furniture or swap with friends instead of them going to waste.

Looking for a new home?

To apply for most of our properties you'll need to use a Choice Based Lettings system (CBL). There are various CBL systems depending on your area of preference.

movingsoon properties - [movingsoon.co.uk/agent/karbon-homes/](https://www.movingsoon.co.uk/agent/karbon-homes/)

Zoopla properties - www.zoopla.co.uk/find-agents/branch/karbon-homes-newcastle-upon-tyne-71282/

Social housing in Gateshead - www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/11734/Social-housing-in-Gateshead

Newcastle Homes properties - www.newcastlehomes.org.uk

North Tyneside Homefinder properties - northtynesidehomefinder.org.uk

South Tyneside Homes properties - www.southtynesidehomesearch.org.uk

Darlington Home Search properties - darlingtonhomesearch.housingjigsaw.co.uk

Tees Valley Homefinder - teesvalleyhomefinder.housingjigsaw.co.uk

Sunderland City Council Homes - www.sunderland.gov.uk/?ccp=true#cookie-consent-prompt

Durham Key Options - www.durhamkeyoptions.co.uk/HouseholdLogin

Hartlepool Home Search - www.hartlepoolhomesearch.co.uk

Northumberland Homefinder - www.northumberlandhomefinder.org.uk

We also offer a range of tenure types at Karbon Homes. If you are interested in a Rent to Buy, Shared Ownership or Leasehold Tenancy, you can see our available stock by visiting the below websites.

Rightmove - www.rightmove.co.uk

Karbon Homes - www.karbonhomes.co.uk/find-a-home/rent-a-home/

Moving out

Whilst we hope that you will stay in your new home for many years there may come a time when you would like to move on.

Here is a checklist that will help you with the things you need to do when you move out.

Things I need to do:

- Give us four weeks' notice and provide us with your forwarding address.
- Arrange to have your post re-directed.
- Allow us access to carry out an inspection of your property before you move out.
- Complete any repairs that we have advised are your responsibility before you leave – if you don't then you will be recharged.
- Pay your rent and any other outstanding debts before leaving and to cover your notice period.
- Inform gas, electricity, water and telephone companies of the date you are moving out, your forwarding address and give final readings where applicable.
- Inform Housing Benefit and Council Tax departments of the date you are moving out and your forwarding address. Remember to make a new claim when you move.
- Inform others - such as your employer, doctor, dentist and children's school - of your new address.
- Contact your local authority to have any unwanted furniture or belongings removed.
- Leave your property clean and clear of all your belongings – if you don't then you will be recharged and we will dispose of any items left.

Ensure that you return all keys to us after agreeing how, when and to where with your Housing Officer. If you do not return all the keys, including meter cupboard and post box keys, we will change the locks and you will be recharged.

You can find out more about ending your tenancy on our website at

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-area/my-tenancy/ending-your-tenancy/

Useful contacts

We try to help keep the communities we service looking clean and tidy.

Local Authorities are responsible for street lighting, highways and offer services to get rubbish taken away that is too big for your regular bin collections. So, if you would like to arrange a bulky waste collection for an old sofa or kitchen appliance, these are the numbers or online contacts you will need:

Local Authority contact details:

Durham 03000 260 000 **www.durham.gov.uk**

Darlington 01325 405 000 **www.darlington.gov.uk**

Gateshead 0191 433 3000 **www.gateshead.gov.uk**

Hartlepool 01429 266 522 **www.hartlepool.gov.uk**

Middlesbrough 01642 245 432 **www.middlesbrough.gov.uk**

Newcastle upon Tyne 0191 278 7878 **www.newcastle.gov.uk**

North Tyneside 0345 200 0101 **www.northtyneside.gov.uk**

Northumberland 0345 600 6400 **www.northumberland.gov.uk**

Redcar & Cleveland 01642 774 774 **www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk**

South Tyneside 0191 427 7000 **www.southtyneside.gov.uk**

Stockton on Tees 01642 393 939 **www.stockton.gov.uk**

Sunderland 0191 520 5555 **www.sunderland.gov.uk**

Ways to get and stay in touch

MyKarbon

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon

Use to set up a direct debit, book and track repairs, check and pay your rent balance and update contact details. It's quick, easy and can be used anytime.

Scan here to sign up to MyKarbon



Phone **0808 164 0111**

8am – 6pm weekdays

We're here for repairs, rent payments and general enquiries. You can check your rent balance and make a payment anytime, without even speaking to an advisor. Just select the payment option and provide your tenancy number to use our automated service.

Out of hours service available:

6pm – 8am weekdays plus weekends and bank holidays. Automated rent payments, urgent repairs and other emergencies such as reports of anti-social behaviour.

Email [**info@karbonhomes.co.uk**](mailto:info@karbonhomes.co.uk)

Email is perfect for cancelling appointments or for less urgent enquiries.

Facebook [**@karbonhomes**](https://www.facebook.com/karbonhomes)

Write to us at:

**Karbon Homes,
PO Box 169,
Blyth, NE24 9GZ**

**Leazes Homes,
PO Box 170,
Blyth, NE24 9HA**

Visit us

To see which of our offices are open to customers for drop-ins and which are appointment only, visit [**www.karbonhomes.co.uk/contact**](http://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/contact)