



Your easier to read guide to your new home

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What is this guide about?



This guide helps you settle into your new home with Karbon Homes.



It will tell you what to do when you need help.



There's also information on your tenancy and the services available to you.

How to contact Karbon Homes:



Online:

www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon



Phone:

0808 164 0111 (8am–6pm weekdays)



Out of hours:

Use the same number for emergencies



WhatsApp:

<https://wa.me/448081640111>



Email:

info@karbonhomes.co.uk



Post:

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



Visit one of our local offices:

Our offices are open 9am-4pm
Monday-Friday



Facebook:

Send us a message on Facebook

Keywords:



This will help you understand some of the main words used a lot in this guide.

We/Us: Karbon Homes, your landlord.

You: tenant.

Tenancy: when you live in a house and pay rent.

Neighbours: people living near you.

Neighbourhood: the area where you live.

Shared areas: spaces you share with your neighbours.

Repairs: fix something that is broken.

About Karbon Homes:



Karbon Homes is your landlord.

We manage your home and provide services.

We want to help you feel safe, happy and supported.



Looking after your privacy:



We collect your information to help us:

- Take rent and payments
- Carry out repairs and maintenance
- Manage complaints and support you
- Improve services
- Check if you're eligible for benefits or opportunities
- Help prevent crime
- Confirm your identity when you contact us



We may share your information:



We may share your information with:

- Other housing associations if you decide to move.
- The police or law enforcement - to help prevent crime.
- Other companies to help stop crime.

We always keep your information safe and secure.

Moving in checklist:



- Contact us to reconnect your gas (if needed).
- Your electric and gas are provided by OVO energy. You can change your provider whenever you like.
- Register with your water company.
- Make a note of where your stop tap is located – this is the tap that controls your mains water.
- Pay your rent as soon as you get your rent account number.
- Tell the council you've moved (for Council Tax and benefits).
- Get contents insurance to protect your belongings.
- Register with a telephone provider.
- Redirect your post from your previous address
- Tell people you've moved such as your doctor, school or employer.



Money help:



Our **Money Matters Team** gives free advice.

They help with benefits, budgeting and debt.

Call **0808 164 0111** or email **info@karbonhomes.co.uk** and ask for the Money Matters Team.



Safety tips:



Lock doors and windows when you go out.

Don't leave keys outside.

Ask for ID from visitors.



Condensation, damp and mould:



Damp and mould can affect homes, especially in the winter months.

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

To stop damp and mould:

- Open windows when cooking or bathing
- Use extractor fans
- Keep your home warm
- Dry clothes outside if possible



Water safety:



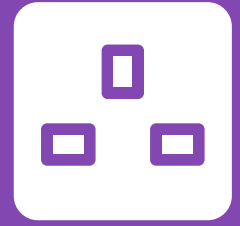
Use all taps and showers regularly to prevent germs

To turn off your water:

- Find your **stop tap**
- Turn it **right** (clockwise) to shut off the water



Electrical safety:



Don't overload sockets.

Don't touch plugs or switches with wet hands.

Turn off and unplug appliances not in use.

Follow instructions when using electrical items.

To turn off electricity, find your fuse board and switch the main switch to OFF.



Gas safety:



Have any gas appliances serviced regularly to make sure they are working properly.

If you smell gas:

- Put out flames
- Turn off gas
- Open windows
- Do not use matches, cigarettes, vapes or turn on electrical switches
- Leave your home immediately
- Contact the National Gas Emergency Services on **0800 371 787**

Make sure air vents don't become blocked.

Allow us into your home to carry out safety checks – we will always carry ID with us to prove we work for Karbon Homes.

Report any gas appliance repairs to us.

Carbon monoxide poisoning:



Here are some warning signs of carbon monoxide poisoning:

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

If you think you or your family may have been exposed to carbon monoxide, you should seek urgent medical advice.

Fire safety:



We have fitted smoke detectors to your home, please make sure you:

- Test them regularly
- Plan an escape route
- Don't overload sockets
- Don't smoke when tired
- Use candles carefully
- Keep shared areas clear of objects



Immersion heater safety:

Here are some warning signs of problems with your immersion heater:

- Very hot water coming out of hot water taps
- Very loud noise from the hot water tank
- Hot water coming out of cold water taps
- Steam or moisture in the roof space

If you experience any of these signs, contact us immediately.



Asbestos safety:

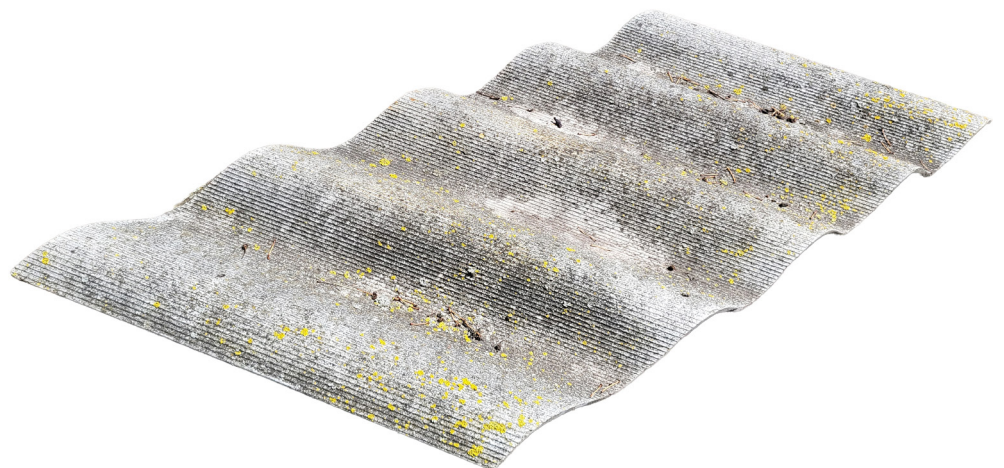


Asbestos can be dangerous if you are exposed to it for a long time.

It is usually only present in homes built before 2000.

Only a risk if it is disturbed or damaged.

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



Mobility scooters:



Most Karbon properties are not suitable for mobility scooters.

We do provide parking for mobility scooters in our sheltered schemes.

They can't be charged or stored in shared spaces.

If you live in a sheltered home and want to get a mobility scooter, please contact your scheme officer.



Balcony safety:



The following items should not be used on balconies:

- Barbeques
- Outdoor heaters
- Flammable items
- Fireworks

If you smoke:

- Always fully extinguish cigarettes
- Use an ashtray or bucket with water or sand to dispose of cigarettes



Flood advice:



If you receive a flood warning:

- Keep a torch, medicines and waterproofs close by
- Fill jugs or pans with clean water
- Move people and pets to a higher safe place
- Turn off gas, electricity and water if safe
- Avoid anything electrical in flood water
- Listen to local radio for updates
- Call **0345 988 1188** for Floodline
- Call **999** if you're in danger



What to do if my home is flooded?



If your home is flooded:

- Call us on **0808 164 0111**
- Call your contents insurance company
- Take photos of the damage before you clean anything
- Write down what has been damaged
- Keep damaged things until your insurer says you can throw them away
- Wear rubber gloves when picking things up
- Put any valuables somewhere safe
- We will help clean your home and sort most repairs
- Wash hands and clean footwear
- Keep children and pets safe

Flooding and insurance:



If you rent your home, we are responsible for most flood repairs.

Make sure you have your own contents insurance to protect your belongings.

Please contact us to find out about our household contents insurance scheme.



Your tenancy and your rights:



Your rights and responsibilities are explained in your Tenancy Agreement.

This guide gives a simple overview of your rights.



What is a Starter Tenancy?



A Starter Tenancy lasts for 12 months.

During this time, we'll check how things are going.

If everything is okay, your tenancy will automatically become an Assured Tenancy.



Your key rights:



Right to live in your home

You can live in your home without us disturbing you - unless we need to come in for things like repairs or inspections.

Right to stay in your home

We can only end your tenancy if:

- You break the rules in your agreement, or
- You stop living in the property as your main home

We must follow legal steps to do this.

Your key rights continued:



Right to repairs

If we don't fix something after you've asked twice, you may be able to arrange the repair yourself and claim the cost back.

Right to be consulted

We'll ask for your views on changes that affect you or your home.

Right to information:

You can ask us about:

- Your tenancy agreement
- How we allocate homes
- How we handle repairs and complaints
- How we're performing as a landlord

Right to complain:

If you're unhappy with our service, you can make a complaint.

Extra rights for Assured Tenants:



Right to exchange:

You can swap homes with another tenant but you must get our permission first.

Right to succession:

If a tenant dies, a close family member who lived with them may be able to take over the tenancy.

Right to acquire:

You might be able to buy your home through a special scheme.

For more information on these rights, please contact us.

Your rent – what you need to know:



What does your rent pay for?

Your rent helps cover:

- The cost of your home
- Repairs and maintenance
- Services like cleaning and looking after shared areas

If you pay a service charge, we'll let you know what it covers.

We have to tell you before we change your rent.



How to pay your rent:



Your rent is due every week, unless you've agreed to pay fortnightly, four-weekly or monthly.

You can pay in these ways:

- MyKarbon: Pay online with your debit card
- Phone: Call **0808 164 0111**
- Direct Debit
- At the Post Office
- By PayPoint
- By Allpay payment card

Help with paying your rent:



You might be able to get:

- Universal Credit (UC)
- Housing Benefit

You can use these to pay your rent.

Contact us to check if you can get UC or Housing Benefit.



If you fall behind on rent:



Contact us straight away, we can help.

Our Money Matters Team can also give free advice on benefits and budgeting.

Not paying your rent puts your home at risk.

Please talk to us if you're having difficulties.



Repairs:



You have to tell us about any damage or repairs so that we can fix them, here's how:

- Contact us to report a repair
- When you tell us about a repair, we will make you an appointment to come out and fix it
- If you damage your home, we will fix it, but you may have to pay for it
- We will show you a Karbon Homes ID card before entering your home
- We'll give you a date for when the work will be completed



Service and safety checks:



Every year we'll do services and safety checks in your home for:

- Gas
- Oil
- Solid fuel systems and appliances
- Lifts
- Fire alarms
- Electrical testing
- Fire door surveys

You must allow us into your homes to make these checks.



Improvements to your home:



You must ask if you want to make any big changes to your home.



Energy saving tips:



Here are some great ways to save energy:

- Turn off lights and appliances
- Use low temperature settings on washing machines
- Take short showers
- Use reusable bags and recycle



Other heating devices:



Storage heaters:

If your home has a storage heater, make sure you're familiar with your controls to stay warm and improve energy efficiency.

Heat pumps:

If your home has a heat pump, it will usually be designed to only come on when your home gets cold.



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.

Being a good neighbour:



You should look after your garden, community and the neighbourhood.

You must not do anything that breaks the law, in your house or neighbourhood.

Do not bully or frighten anyone in your neighbourhood.

Report problems to Karbon Homes.

We have to:

- Investigate if you tell us your neighbours have been bullying or frightening you
- Investigate if your neighbours make a complaint about you

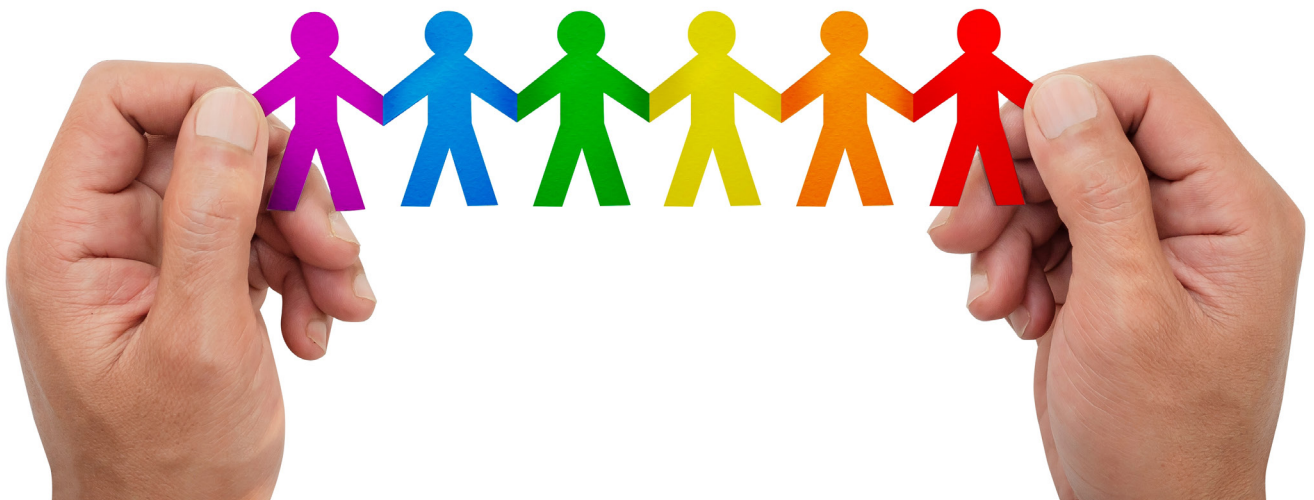
Get involved:



You can help improve Karbon Homes by joining our resident groups and forums.

To find out more, email:

connectwithkarbon@karbonhomes.co.uk



Extra support:



We provide supported housing options for:

- People with mental health problems
- Young people
- People with learning difficulties
- Older people

We can arrange adaptations to your home so you can be independent.

Contact our Supported Housing Team to find out more.



Silver Talk and Silver Friends:



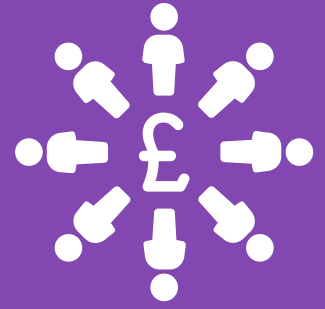
Silver Talk: our free friends on the phone service for people aged 50 and over

Silver Friends: a community group for people aged 50+

To find out more about Silver Talk, contact **0191 223 8662** or email **silvertalk@karbonhomes.co.uk**



Community funding:



Our community fund can support projects in our communities.

They help projects that support with:

- The cost of living
- Community events
- Health and wellbeing
- Improving places

Contact us to find out more.

Complaints and suggestions:



We welcome your feedback so we can improve our services:

- You can give a compliment when you receive good service
- You can give feedback for ways we can improve
- You can complain if you are not happy with our service

Please contact us if you wish to provide a complaint, compliment or suggestion.



Environmentally friendly tips:



Here are some great tips to help the environment:

- Turn down heat if it's set too high
- Take short showers instead of baths
- Turn off lights and appliances when you don't need them
- Dry clothes outside or on a clothes horse
- Fill your washing machine up whenever possible
- Avoid throwing away items that can be reused
- Recycle paper, glass and metal
- Recycle batteries and soft plastics (such as crisp packets) at supermarkets
- Donate unwanted items to charities
- Pick walking, biking, carpooling or public transport when travelling where possible
- Take reusable bags when shopping
- Buy pre-owned clothes and furniture



Looking for a new home:



If you're looking for a new home, you'll need to use a choice based letting scheme.

Please contact us for more information.



Moving out:

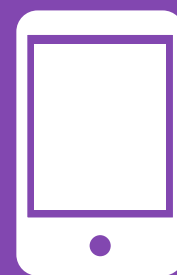


If you want to move out you need to:

- Give us four weeks' notice
- Have your post redirected
- Allow us to check the property
- Complete any repairs that are your responsibility
- Inform gas, electricity, water and telephone companies
- Inform Housing Benefit and Council Tax departments
- Inform others such as employer, doctor, dentist and children's school
- Pay all rent and bills
- Leave the home clean and empty
- Return all keys



Useful contacts:



If you would like to arrange a 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 and 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

Notes:

This handbook has been approved for publication and we've made a digital version available on our website.

We've also created a plain text version to support those using accessibility tools such as translation, audio, changes to the size of text, ruler and screen mask.

We aim to make our information and services more accessible by using plain English in our communication and offering sign language and language interpreters where required.

If you would like this document in an alternative format or have any questions relating to this document, please email:

inclusion@karbonhomes.co.uk