



Your
new home



Welcome to Alliance Homes

We make housing accessible for everyone, create thriving communities and support independent living. We're making every house a home.

We own and manage more than 6,500 homes in North Somerset and the West of England, with a proud history of supporting people through our care and support services.

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Your new home

Welcome to your new home!
We hope you'll be happy living here.

For your peace of mind, we have:

- Changed the locks
- Made sure all windows and doors are safe
- Inspected your electrics
- Carried out a gas check
- Completed an asbestos survey.

Our expectations

As your landlord, we expect you to abide by the terms of your tenancy agreement and look after your home and the surrounding area.

For most of our new customers, we'll sign you up to a 'starter' tenancy for a 12-month trial period before deciding whether to give you a longer-term 'assured' tenancy.

Your tenancy explains that you will need to:

- Pay your rent on time
- Allow us access to your home if we need to carry out a repair or service your appliances
- Look after and control pets
- Behave considerately towards your neighbours and others around you.





Paying your rent and other charges

Your rent and service charges are payable to us in advance.

You can pay these charges in a number of different ways:

- Direct debit
- Payment card
- Online
- Telephone
- Text message
- allpay mobile app

Whichever way you pay, your rent must be paid on time. All payments must be paid in advance or your rent account will show to be in arrears.

What if I'm having difficulty paying my rent?

You must tell us about anything that might affect your ability to pay your rent. We can offer you help and advice, and work with you to sort a repayment plan if you do fall behind on payments, to prevent any action being taken against you.

We have a Money Advice Service to support you with any debt or financial issues you might face.

We offer professional and impartial advice to help you regain control of your finances.

We can support you to budget your income and outgoings and prioritise any debts. We can advise you on how to maximise your income and access essential grants for emergency items.





Repairs and maintenance

You're responsible for the decoration of your home, and any of your own fixtures and fittings, and any damage caused by you or your visitors.

If your property needs a repair, you will need to let us know so we can fix it. If you live in a block of flats or sheltered

accommodation, you will need to let us know about any repairs needed in shared areas or stairwells.

Our table on the next page shows who is responsible for different repairs at your home



Item	Who is responsible?		Exceptions
	Us	You	
Banisters and handrail (loose) internal and external	✓		Unless damaged or removed by a member of the household
Bin stores	✓		Not collection of rubbish
Blocked sinks		✓	
Blocked toilets	✓		If the blockage is found to be the tenants fault, you will be recharged
Carpets - including strips		✓	
Cat flaps		✓	
Ceilings	✓		
Central heating system: solid fuel/gas/electric	✓		
Chimney - inc. pots and cowls	✓		
Chimney sweeping	✓		
CO ² detectors	✓		Only where there is an open flued appliance
Cookers		✓	
Communal areas to flats - maintenance	✓		
Communal areas to flats - cleaning		✓	Sheltered accommodation only or where service charges apply
Communal tv aerials	✓		
Decoration - external	✓		
Decoration - internal		✓	
Doorbells		✓	Unless you are in sheltered accommodation
Doors - internal & external - inc. hinges, frames and ironmongery	✓		Unless damaged or removed by a member of the household
Doors - internal adjustments	✓		Unless due to carpet fitting
Door locks - external	✓		When you have lost or broken your key you will be recharged.



Item	Who is responsible?		Exceptions
	Us	You	
Down pipe - soil/rain water	✓		
Drainage - mains drains, not shared	✓		Except sinks, handwash basins. We will investigate and refer to your provider for any shared mains
Drain covers/manholes	✓		
Driveways	✓		
Shared drying areas provided by us	✓		
Electrical appliances and plugs		✓	
Electrical wiring - inc. Sockets, switches, lighting, consumer unit and immersion heater	✓		
Emergency lighting - communal	✓		
Entry systems	✓		
Estate footpaths, walls	✓		
Fascia boards/soffit boards	✓		
Fence - boundary to road/path	✓		
Fence - dividing properties	✓		
Fire alarms	✓		Sheltered accommodation only or where service charges apply
Floorboards	✓		
Floor vinyl covering		✓	
Garages	✓		
Garden - grass cutting, hedge trimming, trees		✓	Except sheltered accommodation schemes
Garden sheds		✓	
Gates	✓		



Item	Who is responsible?		Exceptions
	Us	You	
Gas servicing and repairs	✓		
Glass		✓	Unless damaged or removed by a member of the household
Guttering	✓		
Hatch to loft	✓		
Insulation to cold water tanks and pipe work in loft	✓		
Insurance - building	✓		
Insurance - contents		✓	
Keys - replacement		✓	
Kitchen fittings - inc. doors, draws and fittings	✓		Unless damaged or removed by a member of the household
Laminate flooring *We will not be responsible for your laminate flooring where we have to disturb it to carry out a repair		✓	Permission must be given before flooring laid
Lifts and stair lifts	✓		
Light bulbs & fluorescent tubes		✓	
Lights - sealed units	✓		
Meters - gas & electric		✓	You will need to contact your supplier. We are responsible for the outside electrical boxes
Mirrors and towel rails		✓	
Overflow pipes	✓		
Outside taps		✓	
Parking areas - communal	✓		
Pests and vermin		✓	Unless in communal areas or sheltered accommodation
Plaster - plasterboard		✓	
Play areas	✓		

Item	Who is responsible?		Exceptions
	Us	You	
Retaining wall in garden	✓		
Resetting electric trip switches		✓	
Roof - inc. tiles and slates	✓		
Roof light - skylights	✓		
Satellite dishes		✓	
Security lighting - external	✓		
Shower unit	✓		
Smoke detectors	✓		
Soft furnishings		✓	
Solar panels on roof - pv	✓		
Spin/tumble dryers		✓	Unless in communal areas
Stairs/steps	✓		
Stair lighting - communal	✓		
Taps	✓		
Toilet seats		✓	
TV aerial		✓	
Washers on taps and ball valves	✓		
Washing lines		✓	Communal areas
Washing machine - including hot and cold water supply		✓	Unless in communal areas
Water supply - inc. taps, valves and stop taps. Hot and cold storage tanks and pipes	✓		
Window frames and fittings	✓		
Worktops		✓	



Safety inspections at your home

We have a legal duty to carry out a safety check at your home every year.

We will write to you two weeks in advance of the date we need to service appliances at your home and ask you to confirm that this appointment is suitable for you.

Gas safety advice

If you think there's a gas leak at your home:

- Don't switch any electrical equipment on or off, including light switches, as this might cause an explosion
- If you can, turn off the main gas supply; an on/off lever can be found at the side of the meter
- Put out any cigarettes or naked flames
- Open windows for ventilation
- **Call the National Gas Emergency helpline on 0800 111 999.**

Faulty gas appliances can produce carbon monoxide. You can't smell it, taste it or see it but it can kill. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include sleepiness, headaches, chest pains,

erratic behaviour, diarrhoea and feeling sick, particularly when gas appliances are being used.

Other warning signs to look out for:

- Sooty marks or yellow or brown stains around the appliance
- An appliance burning with a yellow or orange lazy flame and not a crisp blue flame
- Smoke in one room – this could show that a chimney or flue is blocked.

We've fitted a carbon monoxide detector at all homes that have an open flue appliance. If you don't have a detector or are unsure if you need one, get in touch with us.

Why does my boiler need to be serviced?

We need to check your home is safe so we're responsible for making sure gas fittings and flues in your home are maintained in good working order.

How do I know when my gas service is due?

Your next service will be no more than 12 months later than the date on your gas safety certificate.

We will get in touch with you before your gas safety certificate expires to arrange an appointment for your next service to be carried out.

What if I'm not home for my service?

We will need to access your home to carry out the service. If you can't be home for your appointment we can arrange another one with you. If we're not able to gain access, this could result in legal action being taken against you.

How long will the service take?

It will take around an hour.

Will I need to protect any of my items for the service?

Our engineer will cover your belongings with dust sheets to ensure they're protected. We won't move any of your possessions without your permission.

How much will the service cost?

Nothing, we will meet all costs involved in gas servicing.

When will I receive my new certificate?

You'll receive your new certificate in the post within 21 days of the service being carried out.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous material that's been a popular building material since the 1930s. Properties built between the 1950s and 1980s are most likely to contain some form of asbestos material.

It's a good insulator and has fire and heat-resistant properties, but asbestos was also found to be a health risk. It was banned from use as a building material and strict regulations were introduced. Because it was often mixed with other materials, it's hard to tell if it's present in building materials.

We're asbestos aware and our surveyors are asbestos qualified to identify and survey our properties most likely to contain asbestos. We sample the condition of any materials we find. This information is kept on a register, which helps us to monitor asbestos and manage it safely.

Where might I find asbestos in my home?

- **Exterior of building:** Roof sheets and tiles, exterior cladding, guttering and drain pipes.
- **Boilers:** Some interior workings of boilers, boiler flue pipes, storage radiators.
- **Interior surfaces:** Textured wall and ceiling coatings (like artex), duct panels (access to pipe work), panels behind radiators or heaters, panels around doorways, floor tiles, suspended ceiling panels, underside of stairs.
- **Other areas:** Bath panels, fireplace panels, panels to underside of sink, water tank, pipe lagging, garage and shed roofs.

What are the risks?

Carrying out repairs on areas of your home containing asbestos, may release fibres into the air. Inhaling asbestos fibres can cause serious health issues. As long as materials containing asbestos are left undisturbed, there's no safety risk.

Should I worry about asbestos?

There's no need to panic. It's unlikely to be a danger to your health if it is undamaged and hasn't been disturbed. The health risk comes when fibres are released from damaged asbestos which can be harmful when inhaled. If you have any concerns, get in touch with us right away.

Take care when doing DIY

If you think there's asbestos at your home, do not carry out any DIY work in that area. Get in touch with us right away, and we will let you know if it's safe to carry out the work.

Remember! You may need our permission to carry out DIY at your home under the terms of your tenancy agreement.





Your new neighbourhood

We hope you'll enjoy living in your new home neighbourhood and we want to support you to live in your home.

What is antisocial behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour is unacceptable behaviour from every day incidents to serious crime acts. The types of behaviour that we consider anti-social include:

- Verbal abuse or harassment or intimidation or threats
- Hate related incidents about the victims' colour, race, sexuality, ethnicity, disability, faith or national origin
- Drug or substance misuse or drug dealing or the cultivation of drugs
- Alcohol related nuisance
- Physical violence
- Domestic violence
- Prostitution or sexual acts or indecent behaviour
- Vandalism and graffiti
- Pets or animal nuisance
- Persistent noise nuisance.

What is acceptable behaviour?

We should respect the right of people to live in their homes and be tolerant of different lifestyles. There may be a need to be tolerant of certain behaviour, even if you do not like it.

Reasonable behaviour includes:

- Children playing
- Noise from day-to-day living such as flushing toilets, domestic appliances or routine DIY
- Small scale, occasional parties
- Personal differences
- Family disputes.

What can I do if I'm having problems with a neighbour?

It's important that we all work together to sort out difficulties, we cannot do this without your help.

By speaking to your neighbour, you may be able to settle the matter without having to do anything else.

Explain to your neighbour calmly, in a reasonable way exactly what is causing the problem and why, but don't get involved in an argument.

If your neighbour behaves unreasonably, walk away, don't retaliate in any way. If this doesn't work, then contact us and we will talk to you about the problem and tell you how we can help.

We may need to put you in touch with other agencies, such as the police or the environmental protection team at North Somerset Council. If we do this, we'll work with you and them to sort out the problem.

If you are experiencing persistent nuisance ensure that you keep a record of it including the date, time and details of the incident.

What do you expect from me?

- To report anti-social behaviour in a timely manner
- To treat our housing teams with courtesy and respect

- To understand the limitations of actions that can be taken if you're unwilling for us to contact the perpetrator
- To be prepared to work with us to find a solution to the situation. In some cases, you should be prepared to mediate with your neighbour
- To understand that in some cases, such as parking, we have limited enforcement powers
- To understand that we will take proportionate action in relation to the types of nuisance you're experiencing.

When you report antisocial behaviour to us, we will carry out an investigation. If the incident is of a serious nature, incidents have escalated, or other interventions have failed, your case may be passed to our specialist team.

Depending on the nature of the incident, we may:

- Visit the alleged perpetrator and issue a verbal warning and/or written warning reminding them of their responsibilities and the consequences of unacceptable behaviour
- Invite them to sign a Good Neighbour Contract so they know what is expected of them in the future



- Make referrals to partner agencies who may be able to assist us and offer support (to both victims and perpetrators) to help resolve issues
- Offer mediation which is an effective way of resolving disputes. This involves an independent third party, a mediator, who helps both sides come to an agreement. Mediation is a voluntary process and will only take place if both parties agree
- Consider restorative justice to resolve conflict and repair harm that has been caused. This is process that encourages those who have caused harm to recognise the impact of their actions and gives them an opportunity to put it right.

What can I expect from you as my landlord?

We will:

- Treat you with courtesy and respect
- Respond to your neighbourhood complaint within five working days
- Listen to you and be clear about what we can and can't do
- Respect your right to confidentiality. The perpetrator will only be contacted with your consent
- Take appropriate action for the type of nuisance you are experiencing

- Respond to serious incidents of anti-social behaviour within one working day. This may be an incident such as severe harassment, where people are being physically threatened or there is a danger to life. If this is the case, you should not forget to phone the police as well
- Remove offensive graffiti within one working day and any other graffiti within five working days
- Acknowledge reports of vandalism within one working day and arrange for repairs
- Carry out any emergency repairs within 24 hours.

When investigating your neighbourhood complaint, we will:

- Agree an action plan with you within five working days of your complaint. This will set out what we will do and when. It will also say what we need you to do
- Advise you of how the matter is progressing and keep you informed until the matter is resolved
- Act using different approaches through to court action where necessary
- Work with partners, like the Police to draw on their expertise to find a resolution.

Supporting independent lives

Sometimes we all need a helping hand in life. Did you know that we offer a range of services such as:

- Support to settle into your new home and manage aspects of your tenancy
- Accessing health and social services and other specialist agencies
- Financial advice to assist you with maximising your income and managing debt
- Employment support to access training, volunteering and employment opportunities
- Support for people with caring responsibilities
- Help if you are returning home from hospital
- Source aids and adaptations for your home.



Your data and your privacy

We collect and use personal information in connection with your tenancy. We may use information about your health and any criminal convictions, but only where this is relevant to your tenancy. We will use this information to manage your tenancy with us.

This means:

- Managing your contract: fulfilling our responsibilities and making sure you fulfil yours
- Managing our business in a reasonable and efficient way
- Meeting our legal, contractual and regulatory obligations
- Protecting your rights.

We may share the information with:

- Organisations who provide us with services or professional advice
- Government departments, local government, regulators
- Fraud prevention, credit reference and debt recovery agencies
- Other third parties set out in our privacy statement on our website.

When your tenancy ends, we'll keep information only for as long as we need it. For most identity, contact and household information this means no more than six years, but we may need to keep information about your financial transactions and a record of your name and tenancy for longer.

We also share information with the Rental Exchange, a scheme which helps customers with a history of little or no credit, to build a credit score. Being able to prove your identity and show a track record of paying your rent will open up new channels and services, giving fairer access to services such as bank accounts, credit cards, loans, online shopping, and better gas and electricity rates.

For more detail about how we collect, use, share and keep your data, as well as information about security and about your rights, please visit our website.

Other useful contacts

Avon and Somerset Police

Emergency 999
Non-emergency 101
avonandsomerset.police.uk

Bristol Water

0345 600 3600
bristolwater.co.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

03444 111 444
citizensadvice.org.uk

National Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247
nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

North Somerset Council

01934 888 888
n-somerset.gov.uk

The Money Advice Service

0800 138 7777
moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Wessex Water

0345 600 3600
wessexwater.co.uk

West Country Savings and Loans

0800 304 7041
www.westcountry.org.uk

Meter Number Helpline

(to find out who your utility supplier is)
0870 608 1524



Call us: **03000 120 120**

Email us: **act@alliancehomes.org.uk**

Visit our website: **alliancehomes.org.uk**

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