



# Vico Homes



## **A basic guide to setting up your new tenancy**

Homes with  
positive impact

# First steps

You are responsible for your tenancy and paying your bills. It is in your own interest to set up your tenancy as soon possible. Any delay could cause you to fall into arrears/debt or result in you being in breach of your tenancy agreement.

As a matter of urgency, when you have accepted your tenancy, and often before you have moved in, you need to make sure you have completed the following:

## 1 Set up rent payments

To do this please call us on 0345 8 507 507, further information on your rent can be found on page 3.

## 2 Update the local council

Told the council you have moved in for council tax purposes and claim assistance if eligible. You can inform the council you have moved home by accessing:

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/council-tax/moving-home>

And to make a claim for council tax support please access:

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/council-tax/help-with-your-council-tax/council-tax-support>

## 3 Make sure your gas and electric accounts are set up

Further in this document we have advised you who your energy suppliers are but if you do not know who your suppliers are you can call Northern Power Grid on 0800 375675 or visit:

<https://myservices.northernpowergrid.com/supplier/index.cfm>

To find out who your gas supplier is phone Northern Gas Networks on 0870 608 1524 or visit:

[www.findmysupplier.energy](http://www.findmysupplier.energy)

You will now need to contact the suppliers by phone and register for an account with them.

## 4 Turn your water supply back on

Your water system has been isolated and drained down for safety and compliance reasons. When you are living in your home you will need to turn the water back on, please follow the steps on page 10 carefully.

## Making alteration to your home

If you wish to make any alterations to your home, you need to write to us and ask for permission. This includes painting any fixtures and fittings including kitchen units and tiles. Please send any correspondence to Vico Homes, Merefield House, Whistler Drive, Castleford, WF10 5HX.

## If you need any financial support

Please contact our Cashwise Team as soon as possible at: [www.getcashwise.co.uk/](http://www.getcashwise.co.uk/)

## Any other questions

For any other enquiries related to your tenancy, including repairs, please contact us on 0345 8 507 507.

# Your rent

Your debt officer will contact you at the start of your tenancy to introduce themselves and provide details of how you can contact them if you have any issues or queries about your rent account.

## How will you pay your rent?

If you do not receive any support towards paying your rent, you will need to contact the Direct Debit team on 0345 8 507 507 to set up an arrangement (alternative ways of paying your rent are also available).

## Do you need support to pay your rent?

If you need support to help you pay your rent, you will need to make a claim for either Housing Benefit or Universal Credit (UC).

You can now only claim Housing Benefit if any of the following apply:

- You (and your partner if you have one) are a pensioner
- You live in a hostel or refuge
- You live in accommodation that includes care, support or supervision – this does not include our independent living schemes
- You live in temporary accommodation provided by the council

If none of these apply to you, you will need to make a claim for UC. This should be done as soon as possible as payments will not be backdated to cover any time before your claim (or reporting your change in circumstances). Payments will be made based on your tenancy start date or the date you move in.

If you need to make a new claim for UC you can do this online at [www.gov.uk/universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/universal-credit)

If you are already in receipt of UC, you will need to add your housing costs. You can do this by logging in to your UC account, from your home page click on 'Report a Change of Circumstances' and then click 'Where I Live and What It Costs'. Work your way through the form, adding all your rent figures, landlord details and details of people who are living with you. These figures will then be confirmed by us and should be paid on your next UC payment date (depending on the cut off date for your assessment period). You will be sent a message to confirm the new information has been accepted. After this you can set up a direct debit with us to pay your rent so that it is ready for when your next UC payment is received.

If you do not have access to the internet you can contact UC by phone on 0800 328 5644 and you can contact Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688.

If you are eligible for Housing Benefit you can make a new claim online at:

<https://wakefield-hbnewclaim.egovhub.net/HBNewClaim/launch>

Or by calling Wakefield Council on 0345 8 506 506.

If you are eligible and already in receipt of Housing Benefit you can report a change of circumstances online:

<https://forms.wakefield.gov.uk/Forms/RevsAndBens/CustomerContact.aspx>

Or by calling Wakefield Council on 0345 8 506 506.

# Your Council Tax

You need to notify Wakefield Council about a change in your address.

## Moving into the district

If you have moved into the Wakefield district from another area, or if you were not responsible for Council Tax at your old address (for example living with parents), you can use the Wakefield Council online change of address form. It will take around 10 minutes to complete the form. You will need your landlord's details (which can be found on your tenancy agreement) and your bank details if you wish to pay by direct debit.

You may be entitled to a reduction in how much you pay for your council tax. If you wish to claim Council Tax Support at your new address, you will also need to complete a council tax support application. This can be found online at:

[www.wakefield.gov.uk/council-tax/help-with-your-council-tax/council-tax-support](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/council-tax/help-with-your-council-tax/council-tax-support)

Make a note of your reference number in case you need to contact Wakefield Council about this application.

## Moving within the district

If you currently pay Council Tax to Wakefield Council and are moving to another home in Wakefield where you be responsible for Council Tax, you can use the online change of address form to update your details. It will take around 10 minutes to complete the form. You will need your landlord's details (which can be found on your tenancy agreement).

If you wish to claim Council Tax Support at your new address, you will also need to complete a council tax support application. Make a note of your reference number in case you need to contact Wakefield Council about this application.

Once your council tax bill arrives, you can use the barcode on the letter to pay at any PayPoint outlet or at a post office. You can make an automated telephone payment using the details on the bill or you can also set up a direct debit, if you have not already done so, by calling the number at the top of the letter.

## Moving outside the district

If you are living outside of the Wakefield district, please refer to your local authority for up to date advice and information.

## Unoccupied and unfurnished properties

If your new home was empty for over two years before you accept the tenancy, a 'long term empty' premium will be applied to your Council Tax bill as follows. The premium ends when you inform Council Tax that the property is occupied and furnished:

| From         | Period property has been empty and unfurnished. | Percentage amount of premium. |
|--------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1 April 2021 | 2 years but less than 5 years                   | 100% (bill doubles)           |
|              | 5 years but less than 10 years                  | 200% (bill trebles)           |
|              | 10 years or more                                | 300% (bill quadruples)        |

# Gas and electricity

Here is some information about your energy supplier(s):

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Electricity supplier:  |  |
| Phone number:          |  |
| Meter type:            |  |
| Start readings (date): |  |

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Gas supplier:          |  |
| Phone number:          |  |
| Meter type:            |  |
| Start readings (date): |  |
| Uncap (date and time): |  |

The start of tenancy energy supply to this home is / is not (delete as appropriate) being managed by Energy Angels. Please see below for more information.

Some tenants may pay towards their heating through their rent charges. Please check your tenancy agreement if you think this applies to you. If you have a pre-payment meter, put the key card or code in to check there is no debt from the previous customer. If there is a debt, contact the supplier identified above or refer to the instructions about suppliers on page 2 of this leaflet and request a reset code which should clear any debt. If there are any errors or issues after you have done this, please contact us or call into our Pontefract or Wakefield Hub and they can refer you to someone who can advise you, or refer you to Cashwise for support.

If you have storage heaters you should be on an Economy 7 (E7) electricity tariff with two meter readings, one for day use, and one for night use. When you get your first bill, it is worth checking that the day and night readings are being recorded the correct way round by your electricity supplier.

## Make sure to switch and save

Switching energy supplier can save you money. Once your account has been set up you can see if you can get a better deal by switching tariff or supplier by using an Ofgem accredited price comparison website.

There are a range of guides available on our website, [www.vicohomes.co.uk/switchandsave](http://www.vicohomes.co.uk/switchandsave), which provide information including on how to use your heating controls, switching and metering. Guides include:

- How to switch energy supplier and tariff
- How to use your storage heaters efficiently
- How to use your combi boiler efficiently
- How to get the most from your solar PV system
- Tips and advice for storage heaters – Economy 7 and E10
- Quick guide to managing energy bills with your prepayment meter
- Five easy steps to save money on your heating bill

For further information and support, or for hard copies of the guides, contact us on 0345 8 507 507 and ask for the Sustainability Team.

## Testing and servicing information

Your landlord has a responsibility to carry out checks to your home to help keep you safe.

### Gas servicing

- An annual gas service to inspect and test your gas appliances, flues and pipework.
- Under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations (1998), we have a legal obligation to ensure this happens annually.

#### What

- To protect you and your neighbours from dangerous gases such as carbon monoxide.
- To prevent your boiler from breaking down.
- Possible savings on your energy bills.
- It is in your tenancy agreement.

#### Why

- Once a year.

#### When

- An engineer will spend between 15 mins to two hours ensuring your gas is safe, this depends on your situation.
- The engineer will check your Gas Meter and any Gas Appliance installed in your home.

#### How

- A qualified Vico Homes Gas Engineer will visit your home with proof of ID.

#### Who

### Electrical installation testing

- An essential inspection and test of your electrical system to make sure you're safe.
- Test and check your smoke alarms

- To keep you safe and ensure your electrical work is correct.
- It is in your tenancy agreement.
- Prevent the risk of Electrical fires

- Every five years.

- An EICR test on the fixed installation alone (not including fixed appliances).
- The engineer will take around two hours to ensure you're safe!

- A qualified electrician will visit your home with proof of ID.

## Energy Angels

We are working in partnership with Energy Angels to make sure your energy supply is ready for you to use when you accept your new tenancy.

Your information will be sent directly to your new energy supplier, including your personal information and the meter readings, and the account will be transferred into your name automatically.

Energy Angels are a data processor for us. Please refer to our Homesearch Privacy Notice for any queries relating to how your data is shared. Please visit:

<https://energyangels.co.uk/vicohomes/>

For more information about the major supplier price promise and other great resources.

## Homes not with Energy Angels

Some of our properties, for a variety of reasons, cannot be managed by Energy Angels. If this is the case, you will need to find out who your suppliers are and register with them for an account before you can choose to switch over to a different supplier.

If you do not know who your suppliers are you can call Northern Power Grid on 0800 375675 or visit:

<https://myservices.northernpowergrid.com/supplier/index.cfm>

To find out who your electricity supplier is. To find out who your gas supplier is phone Northern Gas Networks on 0870 608 1524 or visit:

[www.findmysupplier.energy](http://www.findmysupplier.energy)

You will now need to contact the suppliers by phone and register for an account with them. Explain that you are the new customer at that home and that you wish to register for an account. You should then be able to choose your tariff and set up a payment plan to suit you. You may need to provide meter readings to your supplier. Your start meter readings are in the boxes above. If you are asked to provide further meter readings, please see guidance in your tenancy pack on how to read a meter if you require support with this.

## General information

Please contact us before to making any changes to your home to check if permission is needed.

### Storing dangerous substances and items

You must not store or use, in or around your home in any garage or shared areas, any dangerous, flammable or explosive substance.

We do not allow bottled gas such as liquid petroleum gas (LPG) and paraffin or portable barbeques in buildings over two storeys high.

Keeping mopeds, motorbikes or equipment driven by a combustion engine inside your home or internal shared areas is not allowed.

It is illegal to store oxy acetylene gas bottles (used for welding) at your home or in any of our properties including garages and outbuildings.

For further information visit our website.

# Water

If you pay your water as part of your rent and service charges then this will be highlighted in your tenancy agreement.

If you do not pay your water as part of your rent / service charges then you may be either on a water meter or pay your water rates direct to Yorkshire Water.

In some cases we may have informed Yorkshire Water of your details, but you should always inform Yorkshire Water yourself. Please contact Yorkshire Water on 0345 124 2424 or complete a new customer form online at:

<https://my.yorkshirewater.com/moving-home/new-customer/>

## Turning your water supply back on

1. Find your stop tap: The stop tap is usually located under the kitchen sink, in a utility cupboard or near where the water pipe enters your home.
2. Open all taps: Before turning the water back on, open every tap in the property (kitchen, bathroom, bath, basin). This allows trapped air to escape safely.
3. Turn the stop tap on slowly: Turn the stop tap anticlockwise slowly, allowing water to re enter the system gradually.
4. Flush all toilets: Once water begins to flow, flush every toilet, this helps refresh the system and refill cisterns.
5. Let the water run: Keep all taps running for a few minutes, this clears any air from the pipes and refreshes the supply.
6. Turn taps off one at a time: After the flow is steady close each tap individually.
7. Check for leaks: Check areas such as under sinks, around taps and visible pipework. If you spot any leaks, turn off the stop tap and report them immediately.

### **Important:**

**These steps ensure your water system is brought back into use safely and compliantly.**

## Restoring water in a property with a tribune (unvented cylinder)

If your home has a tribune or any unvented hot water cylinder, please follow these extra steps to ensure the system is safely brought back into use. These units are pressurised and require careful handling.

1. Locate the tribune unit: Your tribune cylinder is normally found in an airing cupboard.
2. Check valves are in the correct position: Before turning the water on, ensure any isolation valves feeding the cylinder are in the open position (usually in line with the pipe). Do not adjust the pressure relief valves or safety controls, these identifiable with red colouring.
3. Find your stop tap: The stop tap is usually located under the kitchen sink, in a utility cupboard or near where the water pipe enters your home.
4. Open all taps: Before turning the water back on, open every tap in the property (kitchen, bathroom, bath, basin). This allows trapped air to escape safely.
5. Turn the stop tap on slowly: Turn the stop tap anticlockwise slowly, allowing water to re enter the system gradually
6. Flush all toilets: Once water begins to flow, flush every toilet, this helps refresh the system and refill cisterns.
7. Let the water run: Keep all taps running for a few minutes, this clears any air from the pipes and refreshes the supply.
8. Turn taps off one at a time: After the flow is steady close each tap individually
9. Check for leaks: Check areas such as under sinks, around taps and visible pipework. If you spot any leaks, turn off the stop tap and report them immediately.
10. Run the hot taps: Once the cylinder is filling, open all hot taps in your home. This allows trapped air to escape as the hot water side refills. Water may spit or pulse to begin with, this is expected.
11. Wait for a steady flow: Keep the hot taps running until the flow becomes completely smooth, once the system is free of air, turn taps off one at a time.
12. Check the boiler or heat source.

If your tribune is heated by:

- A boiler - ensure it is switched on and has no fault lights.
- Electric immersion heaters - check the switches are turned on.

If any warning lights appear or the unit does not heat, do not attempt further resets.

13. Look for leaks or drips: Check pipe, fittings, valves and the discharge pipe (normally copper, leading outside). Any dripping water from the these should be reported immediately.

### **Important safety note:**

**Unvented cylinders like the tribune must only be serviced or repaired by a qualified engineer. If the system does not behave as expected, reported immediately.**

# TV Licence

If you have an existing TV licence you will need to notify TV Licensing of your new address in order to transfer your licence. You can do this online at:

[www.tvlicensing.co.uk/cs/update/multiple-changes/index.app](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/cs/update/multiple-changes/index.app)

Where you will need your TV licence or customer number. Alternatively you can contact TV Licensing by phone on 0300 555 0286 or 0300 790 0368 if you are a direct debit customer or have paid in full for your licence.

If you do not have an existing licence you can buy a new licence online at:

[www.tvlicensing.co.uk/cs/pay-for-your-tv-licence/index.app](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/cs/pay-for-your-tv-licence/index.app)

Or by contacting 0300 555 0286.

The law says you need to be covered by a TV licence to:

- watch or record programmes as they're being shown on TV, on any channel;
- watch or stream programmes live on an online TV service (such as ITV Hub, All 4, YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, Now TV, Sky Go, etc.); or
- download or watch any BBC programmes on iPlayer.

This applies to any device you use, including a TV, desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone, tablet, games console, digital box or DVD / VHS recorder.

You only need one TV licence per household, even if you use more than one of the devices listed above.

There are a number of ways you can pay for your TV licence – direct debit, debit or credit card, TV Licensing payment card, cheque or postal order, BACS bank transfer, PayPoint or a TV Licensing savings card.

Remember, if you:

- don't watch or download any BBC programmes on iPlayer; and
- don't watch or record TV programmes live on any channel you don't need a TV licence. If you do not need a TV Licence you need to call 0300 790 6114.

Failure to get a TV Licence when you need one could result in a fine of up to £1,000.

# Help with white goods or furniture

You may qualify for support with obtaining white goods for your new home through Wakefield Council's Local Welfare Provision scheme.

For further information please visit:

[www.wakefield.gov.uk/housing/rented-homes/information-for-tenants/need-help-rent/local-welfare-provision](http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/housing/rented-homes/information-for-tenants/need-help-rent/local-welfare-provision)

Or contact Wakefield council on 0345 8 506 506.

Local Welfare Provision may also be able to help with other requests such as beds and removal costs.

Please discuss your needs with the Local Welfare Provision team.

To be eligible for Local Welfare Provision you must:

- live in the Wakefield area;
- be eligible for or receive Council Tax Support;
- require immediate support to meet an urgent need that poses a serious risk to your health and safety or an immediate household member;
- be in a vulnerable situation and need help to live independently in the community; and
- be able to demonstrate that they have no other resources or alternative way of meeting this need.

You may be able to acquire other furniture, household or clothing items through:

- CAP Wakefield - 01924 381119 or [www.capcare.org/](http://www.capcare.org/)
- Re-Valued CIC in Castleford or Featherstone - 07502 412784 or find them on Facebook.
- Community Give Box - 01924 239181 or visit their shop at Trinity Walk, Wakefield.
- The Bag Fairies - Call or Text 07513 297773 or 07788 243512 (Monday and Tuesday 11 am - 3 pm) or find them on Facebook.
- Tiny Hands Baby Bank - [tinyhandsbabybankyorkshire@gmail.com](mailto:tinyhandsbabybankyorkshire@gmail.com) or find them on Facebook.

## Other support available

- If you are struggling with debt, budgeting or need help managing your finances or benefits please contact our Cash Wise team on 01977 724651.
- If you would like support finding work please contact our community employment advisors on 01977 788825.
- If you would like support with managing your health and wellbeing please contact our Wellbeing team on 01977 724403.
- If you need further advice on how to set up your tenancy please contact our Tenancy Ready team by email at [tenancyreadyteam@vicohomes.co.uk](mailto:tenancyreadyteam@vicohomes.co.uk).

## Key points to remember following your sign up

- When stripping wallpaper, please read the asbestos information we have provided first. Only strip and decorate one room at a time as our plastering jobs are logged per room and we cannot guarantee a plasterer can do more than one room on any single job.
- Please do not arrange for any Artex on the ceilings or walls to be plastered over or scraped off without getting permission first.
- Please apply for permission if you wish to change any fixture or fitting to the home or wish to erect a shed or any other outbuilding - all fencing, decking, sheds, driveways, garages, patios and gates all require permission.
- Please keep all communal areas clear (including door mats).
- No pets are allowed in any home accessible through a communal area.
- If you want to apply for a water meter fitting, please advise us of this. Be aware Yorkshire Water can take up to 12 weeks before they notify us about the meter installation. Once this is received we will remove the water charge.
- Our contact number 0345 8 507 507 is covered all day, everyday. Following this sign up, any repairs are to be reported through this number.
- Now you are a Vico Homes customer in a home suitable for your needs, your current Homesearch Application will be closed. Should you decide to leave this home, you must give four weeks written notice and make a new application to Homesearch to seek alternative accommodation with us.

Please make sure you read your tenancy agreement as it contains everything you need to know about your new tenancy.

## Remember

### To keep your home you must:

- ✔ Pay your rent.
- ✔ Keep your home and garden clean and tidy.
- ✔ Keep out of trouble and do not cause any antisocial behaviour.
- ✔ Follow the rules as set out in your tenancy agreement.

### You must not:

- ✘ Cause any damage to your home (you will be charged for any damage done).
- ✘ Be disrespectful or violent to others.
- ✘ Be too noisy.
- ✘ Use or keep illegal drugs in your home.

**You are responsible for people living in or visiting your home.**

# Vico Homes



Vico Homes, Merefield House, Whistler Drive, Castleford, WF10 5HX



This document is also available electronically at [vicohomes.co.uk](http://vicohomes.co.uk)



This document is also available in other formats on request.



0345 8 507 507 - Text Relay calls welcome. Calls may be recorded for training purposes.

We've teamed up with Housing Perks, a new app that can deliver big savings. The app is free to use for our tenants and gives access to discounts at over 100 national retailers including Asda, B&M, TK Maxx and Sports Direct. You could save between £6 and £12 a week on essentials using discount eGift cards. Find out more by scanning the QR code.



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