

New Build

Welcome to your new home

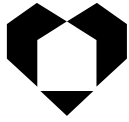
Welcome to your new home, we're really happy to have you as a Midland Heart tenant. Getting a new home is an exciting time but we know that there's a lot to think about.

We've put together some useful information to help you settle in and to answer any questions you may have in the future.

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PLEASE KEEP THIS AND A COPY OF YOUR TENANCY AGREEMENT SAVED IN A SAFE PLACE SO THAT YOU CAN FIND IT WHEN YOU NEED IT.



Welcome to your new home

My tenancy

To make your tenancy a happy one, it's important that you understand your **tenancy agreement**. It's a legal contract setting out both yours and our legal rights and responsibilities.

We've given you a copy and a guide to help you understand it. You should keep them in a safe place and contact us if you have any questions.

Updating my information

It's very important that you **keep your information up to date**. You'll need to let us know if you change your name, if the people you live with changes, if a member of your household dies or if you want to **end your tenancy**.

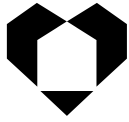
Tenancy services

We have a dedicated tenancy services team who work in the heart of our communities to provide support and advice to tenants who have neighbourhood concerns.

Our team also work closely with other agencies such as the police and local authorities to provide tailored advice and support. You can find out more on our **website**.

Being a good neighbour

We want everyone to feel comfortable in their home, so as part of your tenancy agreement with us you must treat all staff, contractors and other tenants with respect. You should be considerate of your neighbours and try to avoid making too much noise. We don't tolerate offensive or abusive language or behaviour. You're also responsible for the behaviour of your visitors.



How to contact us

Our App

With our free app you can securely manage your rent account, make rent payments, report and manage repairs.

1. Downloading the app is easy and it's available to all tenants. Just search 'Midland Heart' on the Apple or Android app store or visit www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home/my-tenancy/download-our-app
2. To register you'll need your personal reference number. Don't worry if you don't know it, you can ask for it on the app and we'll send it to you via text, email or post.
3. Once you've received your personal reference number, you'll be asked to enter this, your full name and date of birth so we can check that you are the account holder. Now, you're good to go!

Website

Please take some time to have a look at our website www.midlandheart.org.uk, it has lots of useful information to help you look after your home and access our services.

You may also like to read our annual report or find out more about our service standards [here](#).

Social Media: Are you following us?

We're on **Facebook** so why not give us a follow? Our teams share lots of useful information to help keep you up to date.

Call us

You can contact our Hub Team by calling 0345 60 20 540 and selecting the option that you need. **The Hub is open 8am-6pm Monday to Friday.**

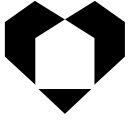
One of the team will be happy to help you.

Emergencies

An emergency is something that causes an immediate health, safety or security risk to you or anyone else. An emergency is also something that is causing substantial damage to your home.

- **If you need an emergency repair, call us on 0345 60 20 540**
- **If you think you can smell gas, telephone 0800 111 999 straight away**
- **If you can see or smell smoke, call 999 or 112 immediately**
- **If you have a power cut in your area, dial 105**

You can report an emergency at any time of the day or night, including weekends and bank holidays. If you call when the Hub is closed, you'll be transferred to our out of hours service.



Paying my rent

Paying your rent should be one of your main priorities as it's a key part of the **tenancy agreement** you have with us.

If you know that you're going to have problems paying your rent, please give us a call on 0345 60 20 540 as soon as possible. Our Rent Payment Team are here to support you and will work with you to understand your specific circumstances.

Ways to pay

With our **free app** you can securely manage your rent account anytime, anywhere on your smartphone or tablet.

Once you've registered you can:

- View your rent balance and payment history
- Make a payment
- Download your rent statement and proof of rent

There are other **ways to pay** your rent such as Direct Debit. You can find out more on our **website**.

It's your responsibility to make sure your rent is paid, even if it's covered by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.

Universal Credit and Housing Benefit

If you currently claim Universal Credit you'll need to update your journal with your new address and housing costs.

Let us know if you're already in the process of applying for Universal Credit by emailing us on **universalcredit@midlandheart.org.uk**

If you receive Housing Benefit and claim housing costs, you should contact the local authority in the area you're moving to, to update your claim.

If you would like us to contact you and help you with your benefits please fill out this form on our website.

Money advice

Our Money Advice team offer free and confidential advice about how to manage your finances. They can help you work through any financial problems that you're having and find a solution that suits you. You can even **self-refer on our website**.

If you're struggling to pay your rent it's really important that you call us on **0345 60 20 540** as soon as possible so that we can help you to get back on track.

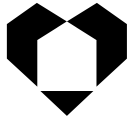
Service charges

We include **service charges** as part of your total rent. A service charge is a fee for an extra service provided to your home. This often covers a communal area that is shared with other properties in a block or on an estate.

What does my service charge cover?

The expected cost of providing the service is split equally between the properties receiving the service.

If your home has **communal areas** that you share with your neighbours your service charge may cover things like gardening, cleaning windows and communal areas, shared lighting, warden services, rangers' services, door-entry systems and fire alarms.



Managing utilities

The first thing you'll need to do is set up an account with your gas, electric and water suppliers.

Gas and electricity

Have your meter readings and reference numbers (MPAN and MPRN) to hand when you call your energy supplier. You can find this information on your moving in checklist.

Your energy provider can be changed from the day you move into your new home. If you decide to swap from the current supplier, you'll have to pay for the energy used from the day you moved into your new home to the date the new company takes over.

As your boiler is new you won't need a **gas safety** check for 12 months. We'll contact you for access nearer the time to arrange an appointment. As part of your tenancy agreement with us you must let us in to complete a gas safety check every year as it is a legal requirement.

Water

You can find out who your water supplier is on your moving in checklist.

Tip: Your new home has a water meter, so you'll be charged for the exact amount of water you use.

Internet connection

Your internet provider will be either BT or Virgin Media. If you're an existing tenant your router will work automatically by connecting it to the smart hub and power which is normally located under the stairs.

Your home will be in a contract with the current provider for a number of months. You can find out how long the contract is by calling them directly.

TV aerials

If you live in a house you'll need to arrange for a TV aerial to be installed privately. If you're moving into a flat you'll have a communal aerial which is covered by your service charge.



Saving energy

Doing our bit to be more sustainable

By making a few small changes you can save lots of energy and money:

- Turning off appliances instead of leaving them on standby could save you around £45 each year.
- Turning down your thermostat from 22°C to 21°C can save £90 a year.
- Move furniture away from radiators to let the heat into your rooms.

To find out more about saving energy in your home, visit www.midlandheart.org.uk/saving-energy

Giving back to look after our homes

Sometimes, the solar panels fitted on some of our homes produce more electricity than is being used. When this happens, the extra energy is sent back to the national grid. Energy companies pay us for this, and reinvest that money into looking after and improving our homes. This payment* is called the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG).

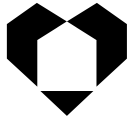
Saving water saves money

Around 18% of energy in UK homes is spent on heating water, so even if you don't have a water meter you could still save money on your energy bill.

- A leaky toilet could add £50 to a monthly bill. So let us know as soon as you notice a leak.
- It's often cheaper to wash a full load of dishes in a dishwasher on an eco setting, than it is to wash them by hand.
- You can save 8-15 litres of water per minute by having a shorter shower.

For more information on saving water, visit www.midlandheart.org.uk/save-water-and-money

*Because the solar panels belong to us, you're unable to claim the SEG payment.



Keeping my home safe

Your safety is our number one priority. We'll do everything we can to make sure you're safe and secure in your home. There are also some things that you can do to help keep your home safe too.

If you'd like to know more about the safety checks we carry out or useful hints and tips for keeping your building safe visit www.midlandheart.org.uk/homesafe

Flushing your water system

When you first move in or if you've been away from your home for a while, you should "flush" the water system through before you use the taps or shower. This is especially important if you live in a block or scheme with shared services.

To do this you should turn on the hot water heating system for at least two hours before using any water taps, then:

- Turn all taps on low and run them for 3-5 minutes, make sure all the water drains away. This includes outdoor taps if you have them.
- Unscrew the showerhead if you have one. Holding the hose below waist height, turn on the shower and run for 3-5 minutes, again allowing the water to drain away.

Home contents insurance

We don't insure your furniture, belongings and other personal items in your home against theft, fire, vandalism, burst pipes, floods and other household risks.

The best way to protect your belongings is by taking out insurance.

We've teamed up with Royal and Sun Alliance plc. to offer our customers a special household contents insurance plan. There are two levels of cover and you can find out more by visiting www.midlandheart.org.uk/my-home/keeping-my-home-safe/home-contents-insurance

Allowing access

There are times when you will need to give us access to your home to carry out important safety checks or repairs.

We'll write to you with an appointment to let you know when to expect us. As part of your tenancy agreement, you'll need to be home to let us in. If you can't make the appointment you'll need to contact us to rearrange.

There are also times where we may need to access your home for emergency repairs. For example, if your neighbour reports a leak coming from your home into theirs.

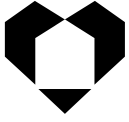
Gas safety checks

If your home has a gas supply, it's in the terms of your tenancy that you must let us complete a gas safety check every year.

This important annual safety check helps keep you and your family safe and makes sure your heating is running efficiently.

We'll need access to your property to complete this check, it's free and takes about an hour depending on the number of gas appliances you have.

If for any reason you don't allow our Gas Safe registered engineers into your home, we may take legal action to gain access to your property and you may have to pay the court costs. You can find out more about gas safety [here](#)



Keeping my home safe

Electrical safety

To help keep you safe, we complete electrical inspections in your home before you move in and every five years after. We'll write to you in advance to let you know when your electrical inspection is.

When we visit, we'll check electrical sockets, wiring, light fittings, wired smoke alarms and lighting with closed covers in your building.

We'll also carry out an Electrical Safety Check (Portable Appliance Testing) in all communal areas every two years. You can find out more about electrical safety [here](#).

Fire safety

We do everything we can to prevent a fire from starting in your home but it's important to know what you can do and how to escape if there is a fire.

Most house fires start in the kitchen, from faulty appliances to taking your eye off the cooking for just a minute, fires can start and take hold of your kitchen in seconds.

Make sure you:

- Learn your evacuation strategy and the best way out of the building
- Keep escape routes, hallways and corridors clear at all times
- Test smoke alarms and any carbon monoxide detectors weekly using the test button

- Check any **fire doors** close fully and have no sign of damage, at least once a month. If your fire door is damaged or doesn't close properly report it to us. Make sure the self-closing devices and the door are not tampered with or changed in any way
- Report repairs immediately so we can arrange for them to be completed as soon as possible
- Never charge e-scooters, e-bikes, mobility scooters or other battery-operated devices in your hallway, overnight or while you're out.

If you have communal areas in your building, we'll carry out a annual Fire Risk Assessment (FRA).

If you have any questions or want more information about the latest FRA done in your building, contact our Fire Risk Assessment Team by emailing: fra.management@midlandheart.org.uk.

You can find out more about fire safety and how to carry out these checks [here](#).



Defects

We understand how important it is to make sure everything is working as it should. Your home has a 12 month warranty known as the defects liability period. During this time the developer who built your home will be responsible for repairing certain items known as defects.

The defects liability period starts from the date the developer handed your home over to us. You can find this date on the moving in checklist given to you on the day you signed up. Some non-urgent repairs may be attended to following a visit at the end of the defects liability period.

You can report any defects to us by:

- Emailing defects@midlandheart.org.uk
- Calling the Hub on 0345 60 20 540
- Please include your full name, address and contact number in the email subject line. Without this information we are unable to report defect items to the developer.
- Bullet point the defects identified and provide as much information about the defect.

Some defects can include: sockets not working, leaking pipework, toilets not flushing, and heating and hot water not working. It's worth noting that items such as hairline cracks, scratches, and nail pops are generally not defects.

If you notice any cracks in your wall or ceiling that are wider than the width of a £1 coin, you should report this to us at defects@midlandheart.org.uk. We will arrange for the developer to come out and fix it. If the crack is less than the width of a £1 coin, please do not report it and we'll take a look at this during your end of defects visit.

Rechargeable repairs

Not all repairs will be defects there are some that you'll be responsible for fixing or replacing yourself. Examples of this could be broken keys or damage not caused through wear and tear.

If you're unsure if your repair is a defect, please speak to a member of our team before calling out a contractor otherwise you may be charged for their time, plus an administrative charge.

We'll do our best to check the cause of any repair with you when you contact us.

If you give us any false or misleading information about your repair, you will be recharged.

Examples of defects

Doors & Locks

What we look after:

External elements of the property such as faulty or stiff to open windows and doors and dropped doors.

What you look after:

Making changes to internal doors when new carpets are fitted and replacing doorbell batteries and lost or broken keys.

Plumbing

What we look after:

Waste pipes, water pipes, gas pipes, tanks, loose taps, leaking taps, and TMV on hot taps to the bath.

What you look after:

Clearing any blocked sinks, baths and shower trays, cleaning waste pipes and drains.



Defects



Tip: The building regulations state that water coming out of bath taps will be limited to 48°C by the use of a thermostatic mixing valve (TMV). You can test with a thermometer to confirm the temperature.

Drains & Waste

What we look after:

External drains, gutters and downpipes pipes.

What you look after:

Removing leaves and rubbish from gully grids. Clearing any blocked sinks, baths and shower trays and cleaning waste pipes and drains.



Please do not flush wipes or sanitary products down the toilet even if they say they are flushable. Do not pour fat or lard down the drain. If any of these items are found to have caused a blockage you will be charged for any repairs.

Lighting & Electrical

What we look after:

Loose sockets, light fittings, sealed light units, electric fuse boards, the consumer unit, smoke and heat detectors and house alarms (if installed).

What you look after:

Changing light bulbs, checking fuses, ensuring credit is on meter, re-setting light and plug sockets that have tripped.

Floors & Stairs

What we look after:

Floors and stairs, and bannisters excluding decoration.

What you look after:

Any flooring you have had fitted and any changes required to doors when new carpets are fitted.

Heating

What we look after:

Central heating systems, boilers, and radiators.

What you look after:

Low pressure on boilers (check for any error codes on boiler and refer to the manual to repressure boiler), bleeding radiators and ensuring the programme is set up correctly.

Kitchens

What we look after:

Sinks and kitchen units which we have installed.

What you look after:

Replacing washers on taps, tightening up loose handles on kitchen units, repairing leaks and installing connections and hoses to your washing machine and dishwasher.

Your end of defect visit

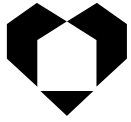
We'll send you an appointment time and date for your end of defects visit which will be carried out by one of our project managers and a representative from the developer.

If you're unable to make the appointment, you can email a list of defects in bullet points to us at defects@midlandheart.org.uk or report them to us on **0345 60 20 540**.

If we can't gain access, a final letter will be sent to you requesting you report any outstanding defects via email.

Once a list of final defects is produced it will be passed back to the developer. Please make sure you give us your most up to date contact details so that they can contact you directly to arrange the repairs appointment.

After your end of defect repairs have been carried out, the developer will no longer be responsible for any repairs. You'll need to report future repairs by contacting our Hub or using our tenant app.



Repairs and maintenance

(When the defects liability period has ended)

Booking a repair

Once you've confirmed that a repair is our responsibility, you can report it by calling **0345 60 20 540**.

You can also report a repair using our Midland Heart app or by getting in touch with us via Facebook. You'll be given an appointment slot and a reference number just in case you need to change or confirm your repair details.

Our contractors will arrive within the time slot that you're given but it may take them a little longer to finish off the repair.

Rechargeable repairs

We understand that wear and tear can happen over time and we'll repair or replace the items we're responsible for when needed. However, if we find that your repair has been caused by accidental or intentional damage you may be charged to cover the cost of the repair.

Emergency repairs

An emergency is something that causes an immediate health, safety or security risk to you or anyone else. An emergency is also something that is causing substantial damage to your home.

Examples of emergencies are:

- An external door which won't lock
- Having no power
- Exposed electrical wires, or water coming into contact with sockets or wiring
- An uncontrollable water leak

How do I report an emergency?

Change to:

- **If you need an emergency repair, call us on 0345 60 20 540**
- **If you think you can smell gas, telephone 0800 111 999 straight away**
- **If you can see or smell smoke, call 999 or 112 immediately**
- **If you have a power cut in your area, dial 105**

You can report an emergency at any time of the day or night, this including weekends and bank holidays. If you call when the Hub is closed, you'll be transferred to our out of hours service.

Damp and mould

Damp and mould is unpleasant so it's important to understand what causes it and the steps you can take to prevent it.

When moist air settles on a surface it turns into water droplets. If these droplets do not dry out they can lead to damp. Mould can grow and spread easily in damp conditions.

Managing damp and mould

- Let fresh air into your home for an hour each day. This will replace the moist air with drier air from outside.
- Open windows slightly - upstairs and downstairs at opposite ends of the house.
- Leave internal doors open so the air can move around.

You can find more detailed information about damp and mould and how we can help you tackle it on our [website](#).



Repairs and maintenance

Communal areas

Your safety and security are our number one priority. That's why we carry out regular checks of our **communal spaces**.

Our Rangers and Estates teams carry out monthly inspections of our buildings to make sure there are no potential fire or security risks.

They also check the quality of your communal services such as cleaning and grounds maintenance to make sure they're meeting the high standards we expect.

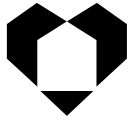
To support us in keeping you safe, we ask you to:

- Make sure the entrance (and exit) door is closed properly when coming and going from the property
- Never let in anyone you're not expecting or who shouldn't be there
- If you spot vandalism or security issues, please report it to us and, where needed, report the issue to the police

Please also remember that smoking is not allowed inside any of our homes or communal areas. Smoking indoors in public spaces is a fire risk and is also against the law.

Home improvements

You may need to get approval before you make any changes to your home. Visit our **home improvement page** to find out what permissions you need.



My Voice

By joining My Voice, you can work with us to make improvements to the services you receive.

There are lots of different ways that you can get involved, depending on your interests and the time you would like to give. You can find out more here

www.midlandheart.org.uk/myvoice

My Area

Become an Estate Champion and let us know what's happening in the area you live in.

My Feedback

Complete surveys and give us your feedback on different topics to tell us how we're doing.

My Scrutiny

Work with a wider group to help influence and improve the services you receive.

My Impact

Oversee what we do to make sure we are doing what we say we are and hold us to account.

My Ideas

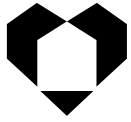
Help us understand your experience and give us your ideas on how we can improve through policy review and special interest groups.

My Team

Get involved in our internal processes through interviews, assessments, staff inductions, training and staff performance.

My Assurance

Take part in our audits and reviews to make sure we're performing as we should be.



Feedback

We want you to have the best possible experience with us and we're focused on providing a fast, fair, friendly and efficient service.

Give us your feedback

We really want to hear about your experience to help shape the way we deliver our services to you in the future.

- **Comments** - feedback on a service
- **Compliments** - when we are doing something well
- **Complaints** - when you don't think we have met our published standard of service

We know that there may be times where we don't meet the high standards that we set ourselves.

If you'd like to **make a complaint** about a service you've received it's important that you contact us first so that we can do our best to resolve the issue.

If you're not satisfied with the outcome you can then contact the Housing Ombudsman by visiting **www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/contact-us**

Leave us a review

If you're satisfied with the service you've received, you can also leave us a review on **Trustpilot**.

We're always looking for ways to improve our **Midland Heart app**, so we'd really appreciate it if you took the time to give us a rating and a review on the **App store** or **Google Play**.

MEL Research

You may get a call from our external research provider after you've used one of our services. They'll collect your feedback on our behalf so that we can use it to monitor our services.

If you'd like to find out more or share your feedback **you can do this on our website**.



FAQs

Do I have to provide my own flooring?

Flooring is provided in the kitchen and the bathroom only. You'll need to arrange for flooring to be put down in the rest of your home.

Can I install laminate flooring?

In houses, bungalows and ground floor flats you're allowed to install laminate flooring. If you live in a flat or home which is above ground floor you cannot install laminate flooring.

Are any appliances provided?

We don't provide any appliances when you move into your new home. If you're struggling to fund these, please take a look at our [website](#) or speak to our Money Advice team for information about other organisations who can help you.

Can I get room measurements before I get my keys?

We're unable to gain access for you view your new home before you get the keys for health and safety reasons. Our staff won't be able to get measurements for you due to the large volume of requests we receive.

Will you provide me with refuse bins?

You'll need to contact your local authority to order your refuse and recycling bins. They will deliver them to your property.

How can I get my mail diverted when the address cannot be found by the post office?

If your address is not registered with Royal Mail you can do this yourself on the [Royal Mail website](#).

The council have not carried out a valuation yet so my property is not recognised.

When will I get a council tax bill?

When you tell the local council that you have moved into your new home, you'll also need to let them know that it's a new build property. The local council should then be able to help you with your banding and council tax bill.

What items can I hang on my wall?

For the first 12 months, you can only hang mirrors and pictures. When hanging these items we recommend that you check to make sure you aren't drilling near electrical wires or pipes. We also recommend that the space behind the picture or mirror is well ventilated.

If you notice any cracks in your wall before your 12 month inspection, there are two checks we ask you to do. If the crack is bigger than £1 coin, you should report this to defects@midlandheart.org.uk. We'll arrange for the developer to come out and fix it.

If the crack is smaller than a £1 coin, please leave it and we'll take a look at this during our 12 month defects inspection.



FAQs

Can I install a cooker hood?

To install a cooker hood, you'll need permission. Simply fill in this form and we'll get back to you: midlandheart.org.uk/home-improvements.

Can I install stairgates?

Yes, you can install a stairgate without permission.

Can I install a shed, satellite or outside tap?

You'll need permission from us to install a shed, satellite dish or outside tap. Planning covenants vary so we'll need to find out if they're allowed in your local area before we can give you permission.

Can I install a dishwasher?

In some of our new homes we've installed removable base units which you can remove and install further appliances. However, the unit you remove will need to be stored and replaced if you decide to leave. Please contact us first, as we may need to visit your home and discuss it before giving permission.

Can we apply for Right to Acquire in the future?

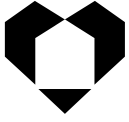
Please call our Hub team to find out more about this. You can also [visit our website](#) to find out if you're eligible to buy your home once you've been in your home for at least a year.

How to report repairs or defects?

If you need a repair to your new home or you have found a defect, email defects@midlandheart.org.uk and we'll aim to come back to you within 5 working days.

Can I enter/use the loft?

If your new home has a loft, it has not been boarded and is not suitable for storing any items. Opening the loft hatch lets moist air into the loft, which can increase the chances of damp and mould developing. The only reason you may need to access the loft is to connect a TV aerial. If you access the loft for any other reason, or store anything in it, you will invalidate the warranty Midland Heart hold with the warranty provider.



Data protection

If you have any questions about your rights under GDPR or want to access, delete or restrict the data that is held on file, you'll need to let us know.

All data will be transferred securely in line with our data sharing agreement and we'll only use your personal information for the purposes set out in our Data Protection Policy in relation to the management and administration of your property and always in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

You can view our [Privacy Notice](#) on our website.

Core

The CORE Privacy notice (COntinuous REcording of Social Housing Lettings and Sales (CORE)), can be found [here](#).



**Midland Heart, 20 Bath Row,
Birmingham, B15 1LZ**

**Got a question?
Get in touch**



0345 60 20 540



[@MidlandHeart](#)



midlandheart.org.uk