



a guide to
moving into
your new home

Moving in and applying for benefit

You should move into your property at least within 28 days of the tenancy start date (which will be on a Monday). Full weekly rent is due from your tenancy start date and you will only be entitled to receive housing benefit from the date you start living in the property.

Gas and electricity suppliers (utilities)

It is your responsibility to contact the gas, electricity and telephone companies to make sure that the services are available when you move in and that the billing details are correct. If there is a key or card meter, further information can be obtained from the gas or electricity company concerned. If you do not wish to pay in this way ask the company about changing the meter.

You can change to any utility provider after your tenancy has started. You can use your tenancy agreement as proof that you will be moving in. Remember to give the utility provider as much notice as possible.



Servicing gas central heating systems

If your home has gas or solid fuel when you sign your tenancy agreement, you will receive a copy of the most recent service certificate. Please note, for your safety, a gas and solid fuel service will be required every 12 months to ensure that your system is safe.

Water supply

When you first move into your home, you can usually turn on the water by the main stop valve. This is usually found under the sink in the kitchen. If you have difficulty you can either ask a neighbour or contact your Estate Services Officer.

If the property has been empty over the winter (October to March), we may have drained the water supply to prevent burst pipes. If this is the case, your Estate Services Officer will make arrangements with you to have the system refilled at the time you sign your tenancy agreement.



Housing and Council Tax Benefit

Chester-le-Street District Council offers assistance towards Rent and Council Tax for those on low incomes. You should always complete a form even if you are in any doubt as to whether you are eligible or not. You can collect a form from Cestria Community Housing or Chester-le-Street District Council.

You must send the completed form to Chester-le-Street District Council as soon as you sign your new tenancy agreement. If you delay you may not get benefit from the date you move in.



If you receive welfare benefits, you must tell the Benefits Agency that you have moved. The Council can't deal with your housing benefit claim for your new home until you do so – which means you would have to pay full rent.

Decorating your home

You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home however, Cestria Community Housing may redecorate or offer new tenants a redecoration allowance. If you have any queries regarding this please contact your Estate Services Officer and they will advise if this affects you.

Getting outstanding repairs done

We will do all major repairs before your tenancy starts. When you sign for the tenancy we will advise you of any minor repairs that still need to be completed after you move in. If you notice any other repairs when you move in, you should contact us.

Furniture

We offer a Furnished Tenancy Scheme for new tenants on low incomes who are setting up home for the first time. For more information on the scheme, please contact your Estate Services Officer.

If you would like more information on whether you are entitled to any help for purchasing furniture for your home please contact the Benefits Agency.





Council Tax

You should inform the Council Tax Section at Chester-le-Street District Council that you have changed addresses.

Change of address

You should pass on your new address details to any relevant people e.g. Doctor, children's school, Benefits Agency (if you receive any benefits), Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) etc.

You can also ask the Post Office to redirect your mail.

Help with the cost of moving

We do not normally provide money to help with the cost of your move. If you need financial help you should contact the Benefits Agency. You will need to show them your Tenancy Agreement as proof of your move.



Refuse collection

It is your responsibility to ensure that bins are left in the correct place for collection by the Council. The Council or your neighbours will be able to advise you on which day the collection takes place. For the removal of large items e.g. fridge, settee, etc. please contact Chester-le-Street District Council, however, the Council may charge for this service.

Home insurance

We insure the building but you are responsible for insuring your contents (furniture etc). We strongly recommend you insure the contents of your home against fire, theft and damage from burst pipes but you should also take out cover in case someone else claims against you. If, for example, you leave a tap running and flood your neighbour's flat you could be liable for the damage caused.

Cestria Community Housing does offer a Contents Insurance Scheme and if you would like more information please contact your Estates Services Officer.





We are committed to providing fair opportunity to access information.

If you would like information in another language or format, please call us on Freephone 0800 587 0001.

Also available in:



Visual impairment formats



www.cestria.org