

Caradoc Road Prestatyn

Top tips to living in your new home



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Welcome to your new home!

This mini guide is a quick reference to get you started in your new home. Below is a brief introduction about some of the equipment that you have in your home that works together to give you a better energy efficient, Passivhaus home.

What is a Passivhaus?

Passivhaus is the name given to a low energy construction standard for a home. It means your home could have excellent air circulation all year round, saving up to 80% of your heating usage. These types of homes are easy to live in and does not need much maintenance if you know how to get the best out of it. To do this, we need to explain some important things to you in this guide.

What is different about your Passivhaus home?

Passivhaus homes:

- Have very high levels of airtight insulation.
- Use the whole house ventilation system to help with low running costs.
- Are comfortable, healthy, and sustainable.
- Have high performance windows.
- Have excellent indoor air quality.

Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR) system

The MVHR system provides fresh, filtered air into your home, whilst trying to keep most of the energy already being used to heat your home. Making your home is a high quality, low energy building. This system is fully automatic and doesn't require you to do anything.

What to expect in the first few weeks & months

To help you settle into your new home, we will be around for support and guidance in the first few weeks and months. You can expect:

1st Week:

- ✓ We will help you settle into your new home & community.
- ✓ Please take the time to look through this guide, and the full online version, and get to know the most efficient way to live in your home.
- ✓ Get in touch if there is anything you aren't sure of.

2nd Week:

- ✓ Once you're settled in, a member of our team will give you a call to arrange a visit and answer any questions that you might have. Of course, if there is anything urgent, please get in touch sooner.

1 Month:

- ✓ A member of our repairs and maintenance team, and your housing officer will visit to see if everything is ok.

3 Months:

- ✓ A member of our team will come and read your meters and show you how you can do this.
- ✓ We will email and text you with a feedback form to see how you're settling in, and anything we could do better.

6 Months:

- ✓ Your housing officer will see how you are settling in.

1st Year:

We will pop along to check your home to see:

- ✓ How you're settling into your home.
- ✓ If there are shrink cracks that we need to repair.
- ✓ Get feedback from you about your first year living in your home and ask if you'd like to take part in a story for local newspapers and our tenant newsletter.

Day to day advice of getting the best out of living in your new home

Here are some useful tips on living in your new home:



Keep your windows closed as much as possible.



Try and use energy saving appliances (A rated) and low energy light bulbs.



Use the shower instead of running a bath as much as possible, this is more efficient with energy and water usage.



Turn taps off when you aren't using the water.



Open blinds and curtains during the winter days.



Always contact us on 01824 706000, during working hours, if you want to make any changes to your home. This way we can help prevent the seal of your home being broken and reducing its efficiency.

Where possible, please don't:



Open or close the ventilation or grills around your home.



Cover or block gaps around the doors inside your home. These are there to help air circulate around the house.





Lower your thermostat

Try turning down your thermostat by one or two degrees – it doesn't sound like much, but this small change can have a massive impact on your bills. Obviously, please don't lower it to a point where your room feels cold, but by turning down your thermostat by just 1 degree you could save around 10% on your annual energy bill. It is also extremely important that you don't place items over your thermostat such as coats or furniture.



Be smart with timing

Make sure that the timer settings on your controller are correct. Work out the schedules of your household and when the home needs to be warm, then set the timers accordingly – for example, before you wake up or when you finish work. You don't want your heating running when you don't need it.

Making a schedule and setting your heat pump to warm your water at a different time from your heating will make sure you have enough hot water for your needs.



Switch off heating in unused rooms

Turn the heating off or down to the frost protection setting in rooms you aren't using. Tailoring the temperature of each room will give you more control over your heating, and how much energy you use.

When you are only heating rooms, you need to stay warm, be sure to keep any internal doors shut so you aren't leaking heat out into the rest of the house.



Make the most of the energy you pay for

Don't trap heat in your radiators. Make sure your curtains or furniture aren't blocking the heat from entering the room. Lift your curtains onto the windowsill if you need to and pull your sofa forward.

Thermostatic radiator valves are fitted on your radiators to allow you to control the temperature of individual rooms. There are numbers printed on the valves from 1 to 5 which correspond to a room temperature.

We recommend making small changes each day until you find the temperature that best suits you we suggest starting at a setting of 2-3 for a bedroom, hall, or kitchen, and 3-5 for a lounge or bathroom.



Keep your radiators clean

Radiators get hot and therefore are like a magnet for attracting dust and dirt and if left uncleaned. The build-up can be quite substantial. Particularly dirty radiators can be less efficient than clean ones, making your system use more energy to heat your room, which will be reflected in higher energy bills.

Try to regularly clean the convector fins – the zigzag grooves running down the back (and front). This can be done with a long-handled radiator brush or even by running the nozzle attachment of a Hoover across the top and bottom.

Energy efficiency

With energy bills increasing, here are some hints and tips on things you can do to help:



Cooking

- Make sure you use the correct size pan for the food and the hob.
- Make sure the lid is kept on the saucepan to keep the heat in.
- When boiling vegetables and pasta, only use enough water to keep them covered.
- A microwave oven is more energy efficient than an oven, so use a microwave, when possible, but remember to switch it off at the wall when not in use.
- Cook in batches when using the oven. You can freeze portions of food to warm up later, this could also save you time.
- Food cut into smaller pieces cook quicker and saves time.
- Make sure the rings on the cooker are clean as burned food absorbs heat and makes the ring less efficient.



Fridge/Freezer

- Defrost your fridge and freezer on a regular basis as this will improve their efficiency and stop a build-up of ice. See your appliance user guide for more advice, if needed.
- By keeping the fridge and freezer full they don't have to work as hard and therefore use less energy.
- Make sure that food is cooled down before placing them in the fridge or freezer.



Washing machine/combined tumble dryer

- Make sure you use full loads and not half loads.
- When possible, use the low-energy program on your washing machine.
- Dry your clothes outside when you can, and do not put clothes on the radiator to dry. This increases the amount of condensation in the air in your home and increases the risk of black mould.



Other appliances and lights

- Make sure the appliance is switched off in the wall when you're not using them as some appliances use energy when on stand-by.
- Use energy saving light bulbs around your home, and when you're not using the room make sure you switch off the light.

Here are some useful webpages for more advice and support

- Denbighshire County Council: <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/benefits-grants-and-money-advice/cost-of-living-support/cost-of-living-support.aspx>
- Government: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/energy-saving-advice/>
- Nest Cymru: <https://nest.gov.wales/>
- Citizen's Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/>

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to switch my heating on?

Your home doesn't have a typical heating system. For most of the year, you shouldn't need to turn your heating on. The windows and insulation will help keep the heat in.

In the winter, when it isn't so sunny, you may need to top-up your heating.

You are able to programme your heating and hot water to come on and off up to three different times a day. You can see our 'how to' video by following this link <https://www.youtube.com/@taisirddinbych-denbighshir3165>

For more information about how to heat your home, please see the heating section in this guide.

Can I open the windows during the year?

You can open the windows, but you don't need to open them for fresh air. The ventilation in the house does this for you by getting air from outside. The windows are triple glazed, so if you keep them shut, it'll keep your home quiet and warm. The MVHR system works better if your window and doors are closed.

How will I be charged for my heating?

A meter has been put into your home. We have registered your electric meter with British Gas. If you wish to change provider, please contact your preferred energy supplier.

Does the ventilation system run all the time?

The system is set for automatic all year round, so you don't have to adjust the settings. Please don't override it as it's been set for your home.

Can I dry clothes in my home?

During dry weather, you can dry your clothes outside. If you are drying clothes indoors, please use an ailer. The water from wet clothes will be taken outside by your MVHR system and replaced with dry air. Please do not put wet clothes onto radiators to dry.

What should I do if my home is too warm, or too cold for me?

The temperature in your Passivhaus will feel warmer than a normal home as there are no draught spots. Your home will be set between 16-22 degrees.

How do I cool my home in the summer?

Your MVHR system has an automatic summer bypass mode, that disables heat recovery when the outside temperature is cooler than the inside.

During warm weather, it's important for you to live in a comfortable temperature. As the temperature outside cools in the evening, we suggest that you open your windows to let the warm air out, and let some cool air in.

What about cooking smells and steamy showers?

The ventilation system has a boost button you can use to help with cooking smells and a steamy bathroom. Please refer to previous bullet point about where your boost button is. In the kitchen, you have an extractor hood over the cooker area that will take the smells out of the kitchen.

Where can I find the boost button in my home?

You can find the heating and hot water controls above the stair cupboard door. If you press the ADV button (which looks like a radiator and tap), then the heating or hot water will come on for 1 hour before switching off.

Can I make any changes to my home?

Your home has been built to be draught proof, to help you stay warm. You'll notice that you don't have a letter box and have an external mailbox. This is to keep your home draught proof.

To make sure your home stays this way, you'll need to get approval, in writing, from our repairs and maintenance team before making any changes or adaptations. Damage to your home would need to be repaired immediately by one of our team and may be recharged.

Why do I have an external letterbox?

Your home is airtight, and a normal letterbox would let heat out and cold air in. We have provided an external letter box to avoid this happening. The key will be provided.

Why can I only use a combined washer dryer or just a washing machine?

Your home is airtight, so it isn't possible to put a ventilation pipe outside for a normal tumble dryer & there is no space for one.

Can I hang up pictures, mirrors, or anything on internal walls?

This is one of the most important pieces of information about living in your new home.

Yes, you can as long as they are attached safely.

Can I put up Christmas decorations, lights, hanging baskets etc up on the outside of the house?

This is one of the most important pieces of information about living in your new home.

As this is a communal building, you are unable to put anything outside your home that fixes to the walls or railings.

Can I put in a cat/dog flap or make changes to any outside doors?

It is not possible to have a cat/dog flap at your home, or make any changes to your doors, as this will damage the seal and reduce the performance of the house.

How to report a repair

We always aim to repair any faults in your home that are our responsibility as soon as we can. You can report it online at www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk/formbuilder/report-repair/view/ or call us on 01824 706000. Routine repairs will be carried out within 20 days.

Some work such as gardens, paths and fences may be replaced when schemes or programmes are planned and will be scheduled within 365 days.

Water

If you have completely lost your water supply in your home, please contact Welsh Water on 0800 052 0130.

Emergency repairs

If there is an emergency in your home, it is important you call us immediately to report the problem on 01824 706000.

You can contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Emergencies may include:

- Loss of mains water or complete loss of electricity.
- Burst plumbing or flood that cannot be stopped by turning off the water.
- No heating or hot water (if between 31 October – 31 March and if no other heating is present).
- Unsafe or broken doors and windows.
- Gas leaks.
- Collapsed ceilings.

We always prioritise emergency repairs because if these are left unchecked, they may cause damage to your home or even worse, pose a risk to your health and safety. Any emergency repair will be dealt with in 24 hours.

Urgent repairs such as these, but not exclusive to, will be attended to within 5 working days.

- Partial loss of heating.
- Partial loss of lighting or power.
- Make safe a fence or gate.
- Bleeping smoke alarm or CO2 detectors.
- Electrics tripping.

What if it is not an emergency?

There are plenty of times when a maintenance or repair job is needed in your home, but we don't class it as an emergency. We still want to help fix the problem as soon as we can, and we pride ourselves on offering a service that is fast, easy and hassle free.

How to contact us

Online:

Visit our website www.denbighshirehousing.co.uk for up-to-date information about our services and latest developments.

Email: Email us on housing@denbighshire.gov.uk

Social Media:

Facebook: [Denbighshire Housing](#)

X, formerly known as Twitter: [@DenbighshireHou](#)

Youtube: [Tai Sir Ddinbych – Denbighshire Housing](#)

Phone:

Call [01824 706000](tel:01824706000) Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 5pm, Fri 8:30am – 4:30pm. Out of hours emergencies call [0300 123 3068](tel:03001233068).

We welcome communication in Welsh or English. If you would like anything in large print, or another language, please let us know your preference.

All information is **correct at time of printing** and is subject to change without notice.