



Renter customer journey for low energy homes: Hints & tips for landlords

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Introduction

This guide is a practical template for letting, handover and management of new low energy homes and those built to the Future Homes Standard (FHS).

What is a Future Homes Standard home

A home that is highly energy efficient, has fossil-fuel-free heating, designed to meet Part L and Part F 2026, and is comfortable to live in all year round.

The Future Homes Standard (FHS) represents a fundamental shift in homebuilding, creating a clear performance distinction between new builds and the existing housing stock. It is both a mandate for social housing providers and landlords, plus an opportunity for letting, tenant engagement, repairs and maintenance teams to reimagine how to specify, market and manage homes fit for a sustainable future.

Central to the new standard is the shift to all-electric homes, using new technologies like solar PV and low carbon heating systems, often in the form of heat pumps. Moving our dependence away from fossil fuels, these homes promise no need for costly retrofits down the line.

This guide is designed to help landlords give renters the support they need at every stage of their journey - handover, tenant communication, repair and maintenance - to get the best from their new low energy home. Successful outcomes depend on clear communication, practical knowledge of household technology, and setting expectations from the outset.



Hints & tips for the rental customer journey

Lettings and allocation

- 1 Ensure adverts include the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) explicitly state the presence of technologies in the home
- 2 Clearly communicate that everything is electric, especially for communities where gas cooking is a traditional requirement
- 3 Highlight the potential for energy bill savings if linked to smart time-of-use energy tariffs
- 4 Explain associated maintenance costs, such as replacing filters in ventilation systems
- 5 Speak to the applicant prior to acceptance to ensure they understand which technologies are present in the home

Pre-handover

- 1 Provide handover and housing management staff with comprehensive training on everything FHS
- 2 Offer access to heating control simulators so prospective tenants can practice programming systems before move-in day
- 3 Utilize "training plots" or demonstration units where matched applicants can see the technology in action before signing a tenancy
- 4 Install QR codes in cupboards or labelling on appliances that link to short, bespoke instructional videos
- 5 Actively support new tenants to understand the availability of smart time-of-use energy tariffs

Handover

- 1 Provide a concise home demonstration and handover meeting
- 2 Set default control schedules (e.g., for hot water and heating) that work for most people to provide a baseline for immediate use
- 3 Supply quick start user guides and access to easy-to-understand videos or digital information, so people can review at their leisure
- 4 Offer additional assistance for vulnerable or elderly residents
- 5 Don't overload residents with excessive technical information
- 6 Undertake a more detailed follow-up visit 14 days after handover



Hints & tips for the rental customer journey

Aftercare and future tenants

- 1 Utilise resident support officers to manage the intensive first 12 months of occupancy
- 2 Arrange winter visits for homes handed over in summer
- 3 Offer additional assistance to vulnerable and elderly residents
- 4 Coach residents on beneficial habits, such as timing laundry to coincide with peak solar PV generation
- 5 Conduct courtesy follow-up calls every 3 months during the first year
- 6 Create a "golden thread" of information through centralised digital folders so re-let tenants receive the same guidance as the first occupant

Repairs and maintenance

- 1 Clarify roles and responsibilities regarding defect resolution between the landlord and the main contractor
- 2 Embed "tech coaches" within repairs teams to provide reactive support for low carbon technology
- 3 Use automated call-centre scripting to help hub staff talk tenants through simple fixes, like re-pressurising a heat pump
- 4 Flag properties with specialised technology in the CRM/asset database to prevent "aborted calls" where the wrong type of engineer is dispatched
- 5 Upskill neighbourhood officers to distinguish between technical defects and user error
- 6 Before a new tenancy period, ensure smart controls are reset for new tenants to prevent "learned habits" from previous tenants causing comfort issues

Continuous improvement

- 1 Maintain an issues register and analyse it for any recurring themes on a yearly basis
- 2 Hold annual supply chain review meetings to share these findings and look to develop solutions
- 3 Establish a feedback loop where neighbourhood and repairs teams share common resident issues with development and procurement teams
- 4 Carry out Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) with interviews and Building Performance Evaluation (BPE) to assess comfort levels, energy use and customer satisfaction of FHS homes
- 5 Ensure learnings are fed back from across the organisation to the design and procurement teams so improvements can be made in future developments



Lettings and allocation

Given that housing teams are the primary point of contact for prospective tenants, it's essential they are well-trained and knowledgeable enough to clearly explain the specific features of low energy homes. Property listings should explicitly state the presence of technology such as Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) and PV panels, using simple language to help shape the expectations and lifestyle habits required for all-electric living.

Hints & Tips

Consistent messaging: Align messaging using EPC and focusing on health, indoor comfort, and low-carbon benefits rather than just financial savings.

Lettings Support: Create site-specific feature briefs and "layman" user guides to address common concerns, such as the absence of gas for cooking and the specific function of mechanical ventilation, low temperature heating and PV.

Internal Training: Provide comprehensive training for housing teams to help them distinguish between a technical defect and a user error, ensuring they can confidently answer technical questions during viewings.

Follow up: Reiterate benefits during matched applicant phone calls before move-in day.



Our adverts explicitly state the technology; matched tenants receive a phone call to ensure they understand the "off-gas" nature of the home before accepting.

Mark Hopper
Future Homes Manager
Believe Housing



Example: Tintern Road, County Durham
Developer: Believe Housing

Homes at Tintern Road, utilise ASHP, solar PV panels, and Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.

Believe Housing avoided making financial guarantees or promising "reduced bills"; their focus instead was on explaining the low carbon technology, comfort and health benefits.



Do, at the offer stage, clarify that properties are "off-gas" and reiterate the beneficial habits to get the most from new technologies and the importance of smart time-of-use energy tariffs.



Don't forget to provide letting teams with site-specific briefs and simple guides to help them manage tenant expectations before a property is accepted.



Pre-handover

Early engagement with the housing teams on how to manage fossil-fuel-free homes effectively, ensures they can accurately inform prospective tenants. This avoids misunderstandings, manages expectations regarding all-electric living, and proactively informs tenants of the lifestyle habits needed to get the best from their new home. A structured pre-handover process between development and management teams significantly improves the overall resident experience too.

Hints & Tips

Resident orientation: Pre-occupation visits provide an opportunity to familiarise residents with the installed technologies and equipment prior to signing their tenancy agreement.

Internal site demonstrations: Home demonstration tours for housing teams to build their understanding of systems and technologies like ASHP and Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR) before residents move in.

Knowledge transfer: Ensure high-quality information exchange from the contractor to housing and maintenance colleagues to resolve technical queries before the tenancy begins.

Operational readiness: Ensure construction programme allows for careful commissioning and the setting of resident-friendly default heating and hot water schedules.

Asset standardisation: Engage maintenance teams early to ensure consistent specifications across developments, making future repairs more manageable.

Future Homes Hub



We don't just hand over buildings - we hand over certainty, equipping our maintenance teams ahead of time with the knowledge and confidence to deliver seamless, future-ready service from the very start.

Sandeep Nayee
Development Manager
Raven Housing Trust



Example: Housing team at Reigate and Banstead

Developer: Raven Housing Trust

Specification of homes: Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) panelised homes designed for operational net zero, featuring ASHP, PV panels, EV charging and MVHR.

Raven have traditionally provided hard-copy guides, but found residents are overloaded with information on move-in day. Now they strive toward QR codes and videos for practical guidance.



Do ensure a pre-handover visit is arranged, to proactively engage and educate customers, whilst providing an effective way to respond to any technology related queries.



Don't rely solely on moving in day to explain complex heating profiles when residents are likely to be busy settling in.



Handover

FHS homes will need a more detailed home demonstration and handover meeting - this ensures clear, essential guidance focusing on new technologies and beneficial habits.

Hints & Tips

Home demo: Provide a concise home demonstration and handover meeting, focusing on critical FHS features and controls for immediate occupation, avoiding overly technical details.

Set default control schedules: (e.g., for hot water and heating) that work for most people as a baseline for immediate use

User guides: Supply quick start user guides, online videos, and aftercare contact details for ongoing support.

24/7 Support: Offer additional assistance for vulnerable or elderly buyers, including tailored guidance for those less tech-savvy or with language barriers.

Follow up: Undertake a more detailed follow-up visit and a customer survey 14 days after handover to identify and address any queries.

User guides in detail

Home Living Guide: Provide a guide outlining helpful behaviours for maximising FHS benefits, such as heat pumps continuously on for space heating with the temperature reduced at night.

Home User Guide (HUG): Include detailed guidance on FHS technologies installed, including operation, location, and maintenance instructions.

Digital access: Grant access to a digital portal with home-specific information, including educational videos, through a user login.

QR codes: Attach QR codes on or close to equipment to provide easy access troubleshooting, self-help, and instructional videos.

Advice labels: Place on FHS technologies to warn householders where interactions may cause problems and signpost them to the Home User Guide for more information.



We developed a Quick Start Guide to support residents in preparing for the occupation of their new home, allowing residents to familiarise themselves with key information and processes ahead of moving in.

Lorna Walsh
Head of New Homes & Customer Care
Peabody

Example: Quick Start Guide
Developer: Peabody

Specification of homes: Homes utilise communal air source heat pumps, Heat Interface Units (HIU) and MVHR.

Peabody place a high priority on importance of presenting real-world success data rather than theoretical savings. BPE has helped them to assess and promote the real performance of homes.



Do simplify technical guidance as much as possible giving access to easy-to-understand quick start guide, videos or digital information, so people can review at their leisure.



Don't overwhelm tenants with too much information on each occasion, instead progressively add to their knowledge during each interaction.



Aftercare and future tenants

Aftercare teams must adapt to the unique lifecycle of rental properties containing FHS technologies. Beyond managing the initial defect period, landlords must ensure digital continuity for subsequent tenants (2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.), preventing an "information gap" where new residents struggle with unfamiliar systems or smart controls retain the previous occupants' lifestyle needs.

Hints & Tips

Staff training: Ensure customer care staff have been comprehensively trained on FHS features, technologies, and benefits, supplemented by internal audits to ensure competency and understanding.

Tech Coaches: Embed specialised engineers from the repairs and maintenance team to provide reactive support and distinguish between technical defects and resident "user error"

Tiered Follow-ups: Adopt a structured contact schedule, such as calls at 7, 21, and 28 days post-move-in, to capture "teething problems" before formal surveys.

Seasonal assistance: Arrange a winter visit for homes handed over in summer to assist with seasonal heating setup.

Extra care: Offer additional assistance to vulnerable and elderly buyers, who may be less tech-savvy.

Golden thread: use centralised digital folders and QR codes so re-let tenants receive the same comprehensive information as the first occupant.



We are transitioning to use a home information web portal that allows customers to access home user guides, EPCs, and certificates digitally. We have designed a winter customer check-in to ensure everything is working correctly.

Katie Gilmartin
Head of Business Development & Innovation
Platform Housing



Example: Midlands zero bills homes
Developer: Platform Housing

Specification of homes: All new builds are gas-free; include ASHP, solar PV, battery storage and EV charging.

Platform are working to upskill and align the maintenance team procedures, creating standards and automated scripts for simple troubleshooting like re-pressuring hot water cylinders.



Do ensure all customer care staff are confident answering questions about FHS technologies and how to get the best from this type of home.



Don't leave customers to work out FHS technology maintenance requirements for themselves. Use automated call-centre scripting to talk them through simple fixes like ventilation filter changes.



Repairs and maintenance

Repairs and maintenance teams must support the tenants living with combined new technologies in fossil-fuel-free homes. Transitioning responsibility from development to the mainstream repairs team requires standardising assets and upskilling operatives to manage specialised equipment once the initial defect periods end.

Hints & Tips

High quality knowledge transfer: from the contractor to the maintenance team, providing access to "as-built" information including specific component details like paint types or filter requirements.

Automated Troubleshooting: Develop call-center scripting to help hub staff talk tenants through simple fixes, such as re-pressurising a heat pump, to reduce unnecessary site visits.

Asset Flagging: Clearly identify homes with specialist technologies in customer and property management systems so that suitably qualified engineers are assigned from the outset, avoiding unnecessary aborted visits.

Standardised Specifications: Focus on a limited variety of manufacturer brands to ensure maintenance teams can stock parts effectively and master specific repair protocols.



Present information near the relevant item. Use clear labels and posters in utility cupboards to explain components, supplement guides, reduce confusion, and help residents report repair issues accurately.

James Parker
Senior Sustainability Manager
Latimer by Clarion Housing Group



Example: Peasecroft
Developer: Latimer by Clarion Housing Group

Specification of homes: ASHP, PV, infrared panels or electric radiators, MVHR and Smart Hot Water Storage Cylinder.

Clarion carry out detailed BPE to assess the homes to help residents, development and maintenance teams with better performance of homes.



Do clearly identify homes with specialist technologies in customer and property management systems to ensure the suitably qualified engineers are dispatched.



Don't deploy maintenance personnel to properties unless they have received manufacturer-specific training for the technologies installed.



Continuous improvement

Monitoring the performance of homes once occupied, and undertaking BPE, benefits everyone. It provides valuable insight into how homes perform in real-world use, helping to identify opportunities for refinement and supporting continuous improvement as the industry scales up delivery.

Hints & Tips

- Logging feedback:** Maintain a tenant issues register within customer relations management systems to log FHS-related queries, defects, and feedback.
- FHS technology:** Hold regular supply chain review meetings to resolve issues related to FHS technology installation and use.
- POE:** Carry out POE, with interviews to assess comfort levels, energy use and customer satisfaction of homes.
- Continuous improvement:** Ensure learnings are fed back across the business.

Building Performance Evaluation

- Building fabric testing:** (HTC test) to assess heat loss and improve building performance.
- Thermography:** Thermal imaging to identify and reduce heat loss and cold spots.
- Air Tightness Diagnostics:** Identify and improve air leakage and infiltration.

Home Environment Monitoring: Monitor air quality and thermal comfort.
SMART Metering and Telemetry: Monitor the performance of FHS technologies, such as heat pumps and PV, including energy usage and equipment defect codes.
Householder Experience: Structured home-user interviews to assess comfort levels, experience and perceptions of FHS homes.



We conducted detailed POE on a 5-home sample, monitoring temperature, CO2, humidity, and energy bills. These findings improved our processes to integrate this feedback into future designs.

Debbie Haynes
Carbon Reduction & Sustainability Manager
OX Place

Example: Youngs Way, Oxford
Developer: Ox Place

Specification of homes: ASHP, solar PV, battery storage, MVHR, EV chargers.

OX Place have carried out post occupancy monitoring, collecting of resident survey data and resident energy bills. More detailed BPE such as air quality testing has highlighted successful performance and critical lessons learnt for improving current and future homes.

✔ **Do** recruit a proportion of tenants onto a long-term monitoring programme (over two years) - it helps improve house holder experience and the design of future homes.

✘ **Don't** overlook BPE - it provides valuable findings that should be acted on to improve the quality of construction and customer satisfaction.



Living well in a FHS home: Beneficial lifestyle habits for residents

As more tenants transition from older, fossil-fuelled properties to all-electric, energy-efficient FHS homes, it's crucial they understand and adopt new lifestyle habits that help unlock the full benefits of modern low-carbon living.

Housing teams play a key role in guiding customers through this change, shaping expectations, and explaining how to operate new technologies with confidence and ease.

Experience has shown that early and positive engagement with residents makes a real difference.

Some key tips for renters are highlighted on the next page. Exact messaging will depend on the technologies installed in the home.



We have created 'Your Home' video guides to help residents get used to using newly installed technology in the most efficient ways. This way residents can feel empowered in their own home and we can offer additional support where needed.

Alex Monro
Head of Development Delivery
Fairhive Homes



Example: Aylesbury housing, Buckinghamshire
Landlord: Fairhive Homes

A Mixture of houses and low-rise flats up to four storeys with ASHP and MVHR.

Fairhive conduct all party cross-departmental site visits for lettings, sales, and maintenance teams before residents move in. They discuss and agree the key actions and messaging for tenants to use the home most efficiently.



Do explain the different ways to operate a FHS home to maximise the benefits in a simple informative way on several occasions.



Don't assume tenants will immediately adopt the most beneficial habits for living in their new home after just one explanation of the technologies.



Lifestyle tips – renting a new low energy home

Heating & Comfort

The home information pack will have specific advice tailored to their home's heating system and should cover typical themes including:

- **Heat pumps** run most efficiently when left on continuously rather following a timed schedule. Unlike gas boilers, they work at lower temperatures over longer periods. The system will gently warm rooms when the temperature falls and only use energy when, and if, needed.
- **When away for short period** (a few days to a week), it's better to leave the heating system running rather than turning it off. Use 'holiday mode' for longer absences.
- **Room thermostats** are pre-set by the installer to suit typical comfort and temperature levels, but can be adjusted. It's best to do this in little steps, leaving a few hours between adjustments for temperatures to settle.
- **Low-temperature radiators** linked to heat pumps will feel cooler to the

touch. They are slower to heat rooms, so avoid switching them off and on frequently. Keep them steady in occupied areas.

- **Underfloor heating** operates in a similar way to low-temperature radiators, warming the area steadily. Keeping underfloor heating at a consistent temperature is best for efficiency and comfort.

Hot Water

- Heat pumps prioritise hot water to maximise efficiency. Setting water temperatures too high can reduce space heating effectiveness and increase running costs. It is important to explain this during the handover stage as customers get to know their home.

Energy Use & Tariffs

- Many FHS homes will have some combination of heat pump, solar panels, battery, hot water storage and Electric Vehicle Charging Point. Smart time-of-use energy tariffs, where electricity prices change during the day, let householders save money

by using, or storing, energy when it is cheaper. Pointing customers to websites of suitable suppliers will make choosing the best one for them easier.

Ventilation & Air Quality

- **Mechanical ventilation systems** are necessary to maintain healthy air. Do not switch them off, especially in bathrooms and kitchens. This could lead to poor indoor air quality and mould growth
- In **winter**, avoid open windows for long periods of time as the ventilation system will provide fresh air without excessive heat loss, improving the overall energy efficiency of the home.
- In **summer**, use passive cooling: close blinds during the day and open windows at night or early morning to let in cooler air.

Daily Living Habits

- **Avoid drying clothes on radiators** - this increases humidity which can lead to higher moisture levels and mould. Use outdoor lines, energy-

efficient condensing dryers or dry in bathrooms.

- **Cooking is electric**, often with induction hobs that heat quickly and clean easily. Induction-compatible pans are required so make sure to explain this to customers.

Maintenance

- **Annual servicing** of heat pumps is essential for efficiency and warranty validity. Some ventilation systems will also need maintenance to clean air filters and ductwork. The handover pack must make these timings clear and who is responsible.
- **Keep the outdoor heat pump unit clear of obstructions** and avoid storing items nearby, as these can reduce its efficiency and potentially cause damage.
- **Don't adjust the factory settings** on the heat pump unit itself. Doing so will reduce the performance, increase bills and may breach the warranty.



Additional resources

Future Homes Hub Resources

The Future Homes Hub is continually developing guidance information on Future Home Standard homes, including both consumer and technical aspects. Check out our document library for the full suite of resources, some of which are directly linked below.

You can also sign up to our [newsletter](#) to receive regular updates.

Document Library

Access to the Hub's full suite of resources

Householder guidance: Buying a new low energy home - heat pump edition

Written for prospective new home buyers, highlighting the features and benefits of a low energy home

Lessons from Delivering FHS Homes at Scale

Summary of homebuilder research interviews providing key learnings focused on the consumer journey

Building Performance Evaluation - Where to start

A guide to BPE for homebuilders and their advisors

Low Carbon homes: Trials and Demonstrator Map

An interactive map of UK low-carbon housing trials, supporting FHS preparation

External Resources

Building for 2050 - Executive Summary

Insights on delivering affordable, low-carbon housing at scale through UK case studies

Good Homes Alliance - Building Performance Network

Information on BPE, including events and training materials

Good Homes Alliance - Knowledge Base

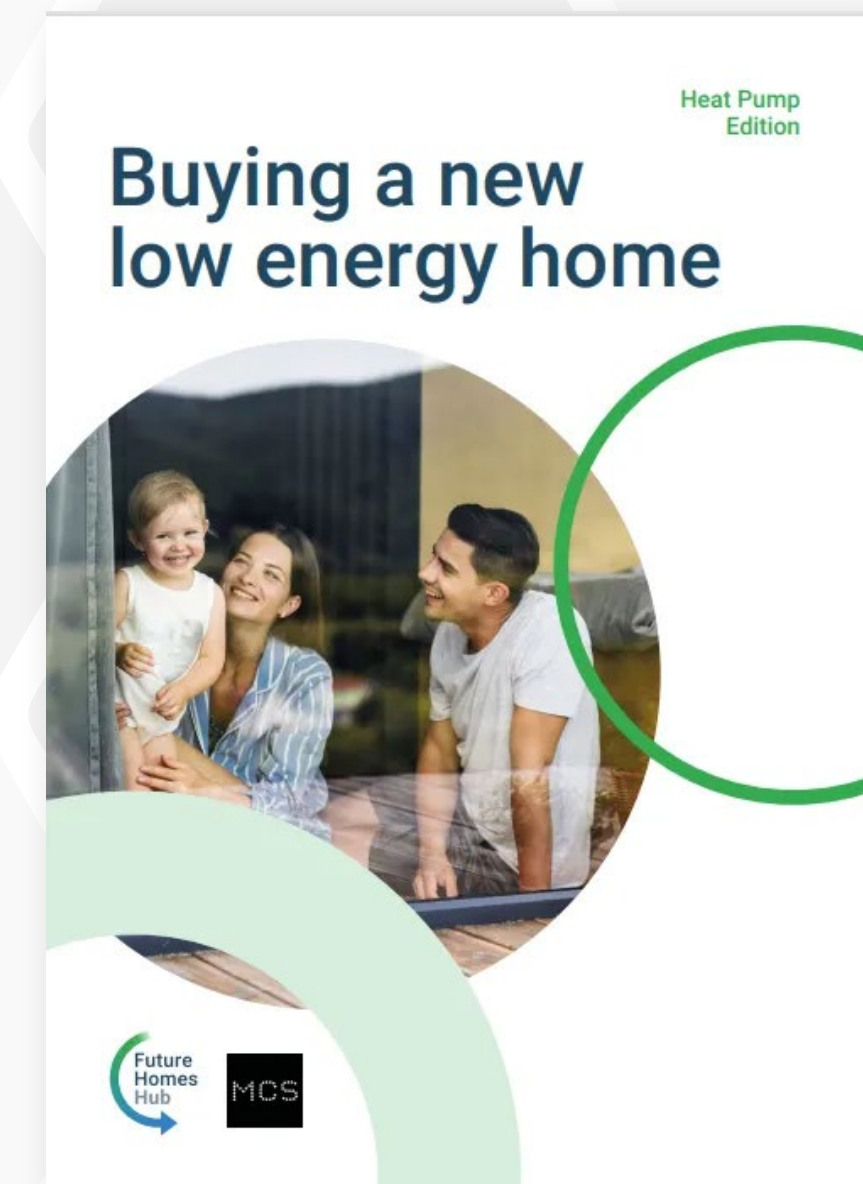
Best practice guidance and case studies for sustainable home development

Energy Savings Trust - Heat Pumps

Consumer-facing information on heat pumps

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NHQB oversee the New Homes Ombudsman Service and New Homes Quality Code





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If you have any queries or would like to give feedback on the guide please contact us.

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