

# Your home user guide

Congratulations on reserving your new home! We've put together some information to help you look after it



If you need this information in another format, please contact your sales advisor

# Looking after your new home



## The drying-out process

We know you'll want to decorate your home to your taste, but please don't do this within the first year of living in it. This is to allow your home to complete the 'drying-out' process, which takes 18-24 months. During this time, some minor cracking may appear (especially in the corners between the walls, ceilings and adjacent to the staircase, for example). At the end of your defect liability period, we'll contact you to arrange an inspection, where you can raise any potential concerns with cracks.

## Brick efflorescence

Brick efflorescence is a natural occurrence when the salts in the brickwork show through the front face of the brick in what appears to be a white chalky/salty appearance. Efflorescence will typically decrease or disappear as the weather warms up, so should be left to weather naturally. As the salts are water soluble, they are often removed by rainfall or reabsorbed back into the body of the bricks. If the salts are stubborn, this can be removed with a medium stiff brush and clean water. To get the best results, we suggest waiting until two summers and two winters (two years) have passed before attempting to remove it. This should also be done on a warm, dry day.

## Your garden

If you've upgraded and have fresh turf laid in your garden, it's important that you look after this, especially during the first four to six weeks after completion. You should lightly water your lawn, once or twice a day for the first two weeks, however this may need to be more frequently if the weather is warm. You can drop this down to once a day or every other day for the final two weeks. When your grass hits 5cm you can start mowing your new lawn, but make sure the grass is dry and the mower is sharpened. Keep people, machinery and pets off the lawn until the first cut.

Brick efflorescence



## Report any cracking to us

Please report any cracking that falls into one of the following categories immediately, so that we can inspect it as soon as possible.

### If the cracking is:

- more than 5mm at any point
- wide at one end and narrow at the other, is horizontal and vertical, and the width is constantly more than 2mm
- diagonal or stepped (of any width)
- visible inside and outside the property
- accompanied by changes to a number of your windows and doors (for example, if they've started to stick in their frames or swing open)
- getting significantly wider or longer since you first noticed it

...let us know.



Call us on  
**01603 255444**  
and select option 2

# Looking after your new home



## Preventing mould and condensation

If your home is damp or you find patches of mould on walls, furnishing or clothes, condensation may be the cause. Condensation happens when moist air is cooled by contact with cold surfaces, such as walls, windows or mirrors. Allowing air to circulate freely around your home can prevent condensation and mould. Your home may need more ventilation than normal while it's still in the drying-out process.

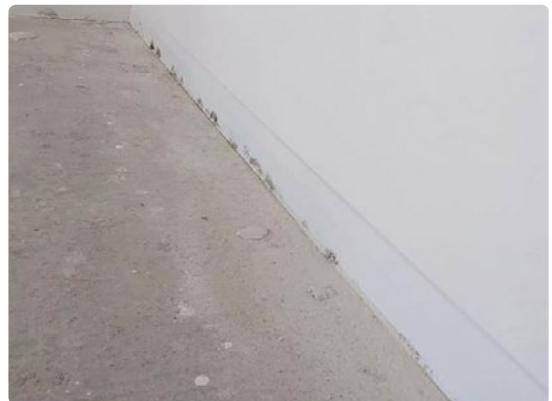
Keeping on top of damp and mould will make your home a happier and healthier place to be and there are a few simple changes you can make to your everyday routine. You should:

- Place wardrobes and furniture slightly away from walls and ceilings
- Keep trickle vents open on your windows
- Close your doors but open your windows when you cook, and keep lids on saucepans
- Keep bathroom doors closed when bathing and then open windows slightly afterwards
- Don't dry your clothes on the radiator

Make sure you wipe down surfaces affected by condensation regularly, to prevent mould growth. Mould can be removed by washing the surface with a disinfectant or a fungicidal wash. Contact our Aftercare team in case of any significant mould, or if you suspect that mould is being caused by a pipework leak.



### What to look out for



Mould can look like tiny black spots, usually in corners, behind cupboards and wardrobes and around windows

Scan the QR code or visit [flagship-homes.co.uk/dealing-with-damp-and-mould](https://flagship-homes.co.uk/dealing-with-damp-and-mould) to read the UK Centre for Moisture in Buildings (UKCMB) guide and find out more about keeping your home happy and healthy!



# Home defects and inspection



## The defect period

Although your new home has already passed its initial inspection, during the first few months after moving in, you may find some faults that need correcting. For this reason, there is a 'defect period', when the builder must undertake these repairs. Your solicitor will be able to confirm the length of this period, which will be two years from your legal completion date.

A 'defect' can be defined as something which does not work, is faulty, or is missing in a newly-built home that we might reasonably expect to be present and work correctly.

### Examples commonly include:

- Missing, loose, broken or faulty components –sticking doors/windows/locks, dripping taps, pipework leaks
- Failure of components through normal use –electrical faults, heating or hot water problems, toilets not filling/flushing, basins, showers or baths not draining, extractor fans not operating or operating too long
- Cracks and shrinkage gaps –these are usually as a result of the property drying out, and we assess this with the builder at the end of the defect period (together with any items reported during the defect period)

## Latent defects

Your home is covered by a 10-year National House Building Council (NHBC) guarantee. You may be able to refer some defects after this period to the builder, if you can prove the defect had already been reported and should have been put right, or it is a defect you could not have known about previously (commonly referred to as a 'latent defect').



# Home defects and inspection



## Reporting defects

To report a defect before the end of the Defect Liability Period, including emergency defects, please call Flagship Homes on 01603 255444 (select option 2 to go through to our dedicated Aftercare team). When defects are reported, Flagship Homes will arrange for the contractor to attend and repair the defect. The contractor, or their nominated sub-contractor will contact you to arrange a suitable time to visit.

After the expiry of your home's Defect Liability Period, you should no longer report defects to Flagship Homes, but you may wish to report and make a claim to the NHBC if a defect occurs that falls within the cover of the policy. A member of Flagship Homes' Aftercare team will contact you towards the end of the Defect Liability Period to ensure that any previously reported problems have been resolved.

Emergency defects	Urgent defects	Routine defects
Any defect that puts the health and safety or security of you or your family, or a third party, at immediate risk; or that affects the structure of the building adversely.	Defects that are not a health and safety risk but may cause discomfort and inconvenience to you or your family.	Defects that can be deferred without serious discomfort or inconvenience to you or your family or a third party, or long-term deterioration of the building and can await the next visit.
<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Total loss of water</li> <li>· Major internal water leak</li> <li>· Major fault with electricity supply</li> <li>· Unsafe electrical fittings</li> <li>· Total loss of gas supply</li> <li>· Internal gas leak</li> <li>· Blocked flue</li> <li>· Blocked mains drain, soil pipe or sole toilet</li> <li>· Total loss of heating</li> <li>· Total loss of hot water</li> <li>· Failure of lift</li> <li>· Failure of warden alarm or call system</li> <li>· Breaches of security to internal doors and windows</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Minor plumbing leaks or defects</li> <li>· Blocked drain, sink, bath or toilet</li> <li>· Defective cistern or overflow</li> <li>· Partial loss of heating</li> <li>· Partial loss of hot water</li> <li>· Minor electrical faults</li> <li>· Roof leaks</li> <li>· Blocked gutters</li> <li>· Severe dampness</li> <li>· Failure of entry phones</li> <li>· Faulty extractor fan</li> <li>· Defective flooring</li> <li>· Faulty communal TV aerial</li> <li>· Faulty stair treads, handrails or bannisters</li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· General joinery repairs</li> <li>· Repairs to doors, windows and floors</li> <li>· Repairs to external walls, fencing and paths</li> <li>· Repairs to walls, brickwork, and slates or tiles</li> <li>· Repairs or clearing of gutters and downpipes</li> <li>· Repairs to kitchen fittings</li> <li>· Repairs to plaster work</li> <li>· Dripping or leaking taps or shower units</li> <li>· Other minor plumbing repairs</li> <li>· Repairs to tiling</li> <li>· Easing doors and windows</li> <li>· Other minor day-to-day repairs or replacements</li> </ul>

# Useful information

## Service charges explained

### Management company fees:

Some of our neighbourhoods aren't looked after by local authorities. In these cases, a management company will maintain the area, and they're responsible for all the grounds maintenance, general repairs, public liability insurance, street lighting, drains, paths and roads. They can also recharge their fees and overheads.

### Local area information:

Doctors

Police

Dentists

Education

Chemists

Post Office

Library

Hospitals

Transport

# Settling into your new home



## Introduction to the NHBC

The National House Building Council (NHBC) was established over 60 years ago and is the independent regulator for the new homes industry. The aim of the NHBC is to help the housebuilding industry construct good quality new homes that meet the reasonable expectations of home buyers.

The NHBC registered house builders set standards of construction, inspect homes, promote best practice amongst housebuilders across the UK and provide cover on new and newly converted homes. Since 1965, the NHBC has provided cover on over five million homes.

The Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) seeks to ensure that new homes are fully completed before lenders funds are released. If everything is completed to NHBC satisfaction, the inspector will issue a 'Buildmark' cover note (known as a 'green cover' note) that will satisfy the requirements of your mortgage's lenders.

When you buy a home from Flagship Homes you benefit from Buildmark cover which is an insurance policy to cover your home against specified risks which could be very expensive to put right. Mortgage lenders prefer to lend on homes that have this type of cover because they know the home will have been built to specified standards of construction. Your home is covered by a 10-year NHBC guarantee.

### Contact NHBC

#### NHBC Customer Service

0800 035 6422

[nhbc.co.uk](http://nhbc.co.uk)

[cssupport@nhbc.co.uk](mailto:cssupport@nhbc.co.uk)

#### NHBC Claims

0800 035 6422

[nhbc.co.uk/homeowners/claims](http://nhbc.co.uk/homeowners/claims)

[claimsc@nhbc.co.uk](mailto:claimsc@nhbc.co.uk)

#### NHBC Warranty standards


[nhbc-standards.co.uk](http://nhbc-standards.co.uk)

Your solicitor should have advised you of all details regarding your Buildmark cover. For further information you can scan the QR code to read the NHBC guide to your home or visit [nhbc.co.uk/binaries/content/assets/nhbc/guide-to-your-new-home-2024.pdf](http://nhbc.co.uk/binaries/content/assets/nhbc/guide-to-your-new-home-2024.pdf)





 [flagship-homes.co.uk](http://flagship-homes.co.uk)

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