

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

Information pack for residents of new build homes

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Our Aftercare service

Our Aftercare service is here to help our customers who occupy a newly built home.

As your home is a new build, there are certain things you should be aware of to help you take care of it. The information in this booklet has been put together based on questions we're frequently asked about our new build homes.

Our team is made up of Aftercare Advisors and Aftercare Officers. The team is available to answer general enquires, manage defect reporting and provide ongoing support for customers in newly built homes.

If you'd like to speak to us, just call 0800 111 4013 and ask for the Aftercare Team.

Your new build home

Shrinkage

Over time, as your home is lived in and heated, timber and other materials used in the property's construction will shrink. This shrinkage can cause small cracks on the walls and the ceiling finish. Small gaps may also appear at joints and corners of skirting boards and other interior joinery.

These small cracks are not structurally significant and can be put right in the normal process of redecoration. These are not defects and therefore won't be covered by the property warranty or the contractor's warranty.

To minimise cracking, try to keep a reasonably even temperature throughout your home, even in rooms which aren't occupied.

Ventilation

Your property is a well-insulated and well-sealed dwelling, built to a high standard of construction and air tightness.

However, it's important to remember that the property needs time to dry out, and that you'll need to allow any moisture to evaporate by keeping your home well ventilated.

Leaving a window, or at least the trickle vents at the top of your windows, slightly open for as long as you can each day will help to reduce moisture levels in your home.

Condensation and mould

Condensation is created when warm air comes into contact with cold surfaces, or when there's too much moisture in your home.

The dampness caused by a large amount of condensation can lead to the growth of mould on walls, furniture and other belongings, mildew on fabrics and can even cause wood to rot – including window frames. It can also damage your health.


For advice on minimising condensation in your new home please visit our website on the link below.

 longhurst-group.org.uk/condensation

Water temperature

Please be aware that due to building regulations, your bath has been fitted with a Thermostatic Mixing Valve (TMV).

TMVs, also known as blending valves, help to regulate the flow of hot and cold water, usually into a basin or bath, so that the risk of scalding is minimised.

 **Neither Longhurst Group nor the onsite contractor are able to remove the TMV, and this isn't classed as a defect.**

Transferring utilities

It's important that you transfer your home's utilities into your name as soon as possible, by contacting the supplier directly. You can arrange to move your gas and electricity to a different supplier once you've received your first bill.

Please make any arrangements directly with your chosen company.

What's a 'defect'?

As your home is a new build, any repairs in relation to your property that aren't a result of damage caused by residents are referred to as 'defects.'

The Defect Period

The first 12 months after a property was built is known as the 'Defect Period.' During this period it's important that you contact us directly to report any defect issues (see 'Reporting a Defect' on page 10).

Any issues reported to us will be reviewed by our Aftercare Team.

All accepted defect reports will be forwarded to the contractor who built your home, and it's their responsibility to rectify them.

End of Defects Liability Period

When your property is 12 months old, the Aftercare Team will administer the End of Defects process.

This'll involve an inspection of your home with yourself, one of our colleagues, and where required, the developer.

This provides everyone with an opportunity to identify any outstanding defects and to ensure that they're managed or repaired effectively as needed.

What's classed as a 'defect'?

The following are examples of non-emergency defects:

- Shower screen leaking
- Faulty bathroom sealant
- Problems with light fittings and sockets
- Faulty taps
- Problems with an electric shower
- Door easing or sticking issues
- External lighting not working.

The following are examples of issues that wouldn't be classed as defects:

- Issues caused by alterations you have carried out (e.g a leak occurring after a customer installed their own shower screen)
- Waterlogged gardens caused by customers' alterations or not following maintenance advice
- Drain blockages caused by misuse or not following maintenance advice
- Damage to the property, either malicious or accidental.

Issues that aren't classed as defects wouldn't be the responsibility of us or the developer to repair and would be up to you as homeowner or occupier to maintain.

Cosmetic defects

Some defects are defined as 'cosmetic'. All cosmetic defects will be recorded and reviewed. Any cosmetic defect reports that are accepted will be addressed by the developer following the End of Defect Inspection.

Cosmetic defect repairs may include:

- Scratches and minor damage to walls, doors and windows etc that were recorded at the point of handover from the developer to Longhurst Group
- Excessive cracking to plasterwork (those wider than a £1 coin).

Reporting a defect

Non-emergency defects

To report a non-emergency defect please contact us by phone or online on the details below.

 0800 111 4013

 longhurst-group.org.uk/defects

 **Our contact centre is open 08.30–17.00 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 10.30–17.00 on Wednesdays. Any calls made outside these hours will be handled by our out of hours operators.**

Emergency defect repairs

An emergency is defined as something which couldn't have been foreseen and which could cause:

- a danger to the health and safety of yourself or someone else
- serious damage and/or destruction to property
- a security issue.

If you identify an emergency repair please contact us on:

 0800 111 4013

 **Gas emergencies**

If you suspect a gas leak:

- Extinguish all naked flames
- Turn off the gas at the meter
- Open all the doors and windows
- Don't turn on any switches or electrical apparatus/appliances
- Call the emergency gas service on 0800 111 999
- Then call us on 0800 111 4013.



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