



WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

SHARED OWNERSHIP

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO TAKING
CARE OF YOUR NEW HOME



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TO YOUR
NEW HOME

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WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

Thank you for choosing to buy an emh home, which we hope you will enjoy for many years to come.

Moving into a brand-new home is an exciting experience. However, there are some things worth being aware of, so you know what to expect when you move in.

Your new home will have been inspected prior to completion to ensure required industry quality standards are met. Building regulation compliance will have been granted along with quality inspections by our own clerk of works, the home warranty provider and the site-based construction team throughout all key stages in construction.

On the day of completion, as well as completing your new home checklist your Sales and Marketing Consultant will show you the basic facilities. However, it is important that you familiarise yourself with your new home and how it works.

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MOVING INTO YOUR NEW HOME

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

You will need to undertake the following:

Complete a new homes checklist with your Sales and Marketing Consultant highlighting any visual damage such as dents, chips, scratches etc. As well as general defects.

Emh provide Buildings Insurance, but you'll need to insure the contents of your new home.

Arrange to have your boiler serviced yearly as failure to do so could negate any warranties that are in place.

Please note: this service must be carried out every year by a Gas Safe Engineer, otherwise your warranty will be invalid.

Please do not carry out any alterations or additions to your property without written permission from the group.

Throughout this guide we've indicated some particularly useful hints which we'd really like to draw your attention to.

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PEACE OF MIND WITH YOUR BUILDING WARRANTY

You have the comfort and peace of mind knowing that your new home has the benefit of a build warranty cover; please refer to your warranty documentation which will be provided by your solicitor for more information.

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UNDERSTANDING DEFECTS

PRE-OCCUPATION DEFECTS

Once your property has been signed off by emh, customers own quality inspections will not be accepted. However, you will have the opportunity to identify any warranty defined defects during your home quality check. Any works identified through the New Homes Checklist process, if deemed valid by the emh Aftercare Team will be logged with the developer to complete. *As these works will be of a minor nature these may take several weeks for the developer to complete.*

It is commonplace for appointments to be made during regular working hours and access will need to be provided to allow these works to be completed. Similarly if there are any remaining snag repairs identified during the construction phase that have not completed prior to you moving in, we will ask the developer to contact you directly. Therefore, please be advised your contact information will be passed to the developer.



12 MONTH DEFECT LIABILITY PERIOD

Whilst we hope that buying your new home is trouble free, unfortunately on occasion things may go wrong. For the first 12 months genuine defects will be rectified by the developer. Please note this does NOT include:

- General wear and tear
- Normal condensation and dampness.
- Normal shrinkage
- Damage caused by failure to maintain the property
- Damage covered by an alternative insurance policy (e.g., storm damage)
- Any form of misuse
- Costs incurred by the homeowner to fix a defect which has not been formally reported and approved.

Reporting of Contractual Defects

Please report all defects to:

Customer service via our online portal:

www.myhomeonline.org.uk

Website: **www.emhhomes.org.uk**

Or call **0300 123 6000**.

Outside normal working hours/ weekends/ bank holidays you will be directed to our Out of Hours team should you need to report an emergency defect.

The following are genuine emergency situations and should be completed within 24 hours and reported by phone on the above number:

- Water leak – if this cannot be contained.
N.B. Turn water supply off at mains
- Complete failure of central heating/hot water system
- Complete failure of electrics, but please check the following before calling:
 - i. Consumer Unit - to make sure that a trip switch has not been activated
 - ii. Local power supply – to make sure that there is not a general power cut
- Flooding caused by blocked drains
- External door locks failing meaning property not secure.

The following are NOT classed as emergency repairs:

- Dripping tap
- Running overflow pipe
- Low water pressure
- Some radiators not getting warm
- Noisy central heating system

- Containable leaks
- Blocked drains caused by unsuitable items being flushed e.g., baby wipes, disposable nappies or kitchen paper towels
- Loose roof/ridge tiles or damage to fence panels caused by storms.

All other genuine defects will be classed as routine and will once validated be logged with the developer to complete. These will be booked in with you directly by the developer. Whilst these are non-urgent defects emh will monitor until works are completed.

Never contact the developer directly in relation to any defects

PLEASE NOTE:

In the event of a suspected gas leak please turn the supply off in the meter box and call the 24-hour National Gas Emergency Service on: **0800 111 999**

Do not use electrical switches, extinguish all naked flames and open all doors and window.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Bricks/Mortar/Render

External shrinkage cracking is normal, but if cracking exceeds 3mm, we will review this with you.

Central Heating System/Cylinder

Your boiler and cylinder are covered under the defects period, but you are responsible for servicing every 12 months to maintain the cover.

Chips and scratches

Normal wear and tear is not covered under defects. You should inspect your home when carrying out your new home checklist as advised by your sales consultant. Some minor scratches to surfaces, glazing etc. may be present, however these will only be reported as construction defects if they fall outside of industry standards / tolerances. any glazing defects need to fall outside of the minimum requirements set out from the glass and glazing federation.

Colour variations

Your home is built using natural materials, so some variation in colour and tone is normal and not classified as defects.

Condensation

This is normal and will gradually reduce as your new home dries out. Avoid contributing to this to prevent harmful levels of condensation by following the advice later in this document. However, should you have any concerns in relation to the severity please contact us.

Cracks – internal

Minor shrinkage cracking is normal as your new home dries out; materials will shrink which can cause hairline cracks (less than the width of a pound coin) and should be dealt with by you in the normal course of redecoration. Anything more could be considered a defect.

Decoration

Consistency in paint finishes can vary and all decoration should be viewed in natural daylight from a distance of no less than 2 meters.

Drainage

Blocked drains are becoming an increasing problem, so do take care not to dispose of unsuitable items via the sink or toilet. The developer is only responsible for unblocking drains caused by a construction defect. emh reserves the right to recover costs for any corrective works undertaken due to misuse.

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Extractor fans & vents

Isolation switches should always be kept ON. Condensation can result in mould on surfaces, so ensure you use the extractor fans installed to prevent such damage.

Fencing

Maintenance and care are the homeowner's responsibility. Any damage caused post occupation is not classified as a construction defect.

Internal doors

Whilst your new doors will have been fitted with adequate tolerances around the frame, on occasion you may need to ease the bottom of the doors to accommodate your required floor finishes. This is customer responsibility and not classed as a defect.

Landscaping

Maintenance and care are the homeowner's responsibility. Damage post occupation is not classified as a construction defect.

Loft

The loft area is well insulated and should not be used for storage. It is not designed for the weight of stored items which may also suffer from mould and damp if loft is continually opened.

Paths/drives

Some minor ground settlement is normal and to be expected. Pedestrian Paths are not suitable for vehicle use/parking. Damage post occupation is not classified as a construction defect.

Plumbing leaks

Leaks caused by a defect in materials or workmanship are covered under defects liability period. Please note that any damage caused to personal effects is not covered and provision should be made via your household insurance policy.

Roof structure/tiles

Damage due to severe weather conditions is not classified as construction defects. Accidental damage by third parties may be covered under your emh building insurance.

Timber floors/stairs

Natural shrinkage will occur as they dry out, which may result in squeaking components as they move against each other. This is normal and to be expected.

Windows/frames

Defects are covered although any scratched glass/damage should be reported when completing your new home checklist.

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END OF DEFECTS INSPECTION

An end of defects inspection will be scheduled 12 months after practical completion of your home, not 12 months from occupation. It is essential that you are available for this inspection as it will be your opportunity to get any outstanding defects works carried out before your warranty parameters change (see year 2-10) You will be contacted by a member of the Aftercare Team to schedule the visit.

An additional 12-month defect liability is offered through the developer. However, you will need to make any claims during this period directly through your builder. If the claim is refused, you will need to contact your warranty provider who will deal with the claim on your behalf.

YEARS 2-10

Your build warranty covers you against the cost of putting right physical damage to the home caused by a defect in major structural items such as:

- Foundations
- Load-bearing walls or load-bearing parts of the roof/floors
- Below-ground drainage for which you are responsible.

Please see the policy documentation provided for full details and terms and conditions. All communications with warranty providers from years 2-10 sit with the homeowner.



APPLIANCES

Appliances included in your new home are covered by the manufacturer's warranty – please ensure you complete and return product warranty documents to ensure that your appliances have been registered otherwise you may not be covered.

If an appliance does not work, please check the following before calling for service:

- Electricity supply has not been turned off at the fused spur switch
- Refer to the Fault-Finding section of the operating instructions

If, after carrying out these checks, you are still encountering problems please report this **directly** to the relevant appliance service helpline, details of which will be found in your Handover Pack.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU COMPLETE AND RETURN ALL APPLIANCE WARRANTY DOCUMENTS AS THE GUARANTEE IS HELD DIRECTLY WITH YOU, AS THE HOMEOWNER YOU MUST ARRANGE ALL SERVICE CALLS DIRECTLY WITH THE MANUFACTURER.



ESSENTIAL SERVICES

ELECTRICITY

Your consumer unit contains the main on/off switch and several labelled miniature circuit breakers (MCB's) which will disconnect, or 'trip' if the circuit is overloaded or if there is a fault. These are easily reset by returning the switch to the 'on' position. MCB's that trip repeatedly may indicate a fault with an appliance.

Additional protection is provided by a residual current device (RCD) and a 'tripped' RCD can also be reset by returning the switch to the 'on' position. The RCD should be checked periodically by pressing the 'test' button.

You should use a cable detector to check thoroughly before fixing to walls, floors or ceilings.

Alterations to electrics: any alterations, investigations or maintenance must be carried out by a competent electrician.

WATER

All new homes are now fitted with a water meter that registers the volume of water used within your home. These meters may be fitted in the pavement outside your home or within the kitchen sink unit.

It is important for you to know where the main stop valve is so that you can turn the water supply off in the event of an emergency. It is recommended that you close the stop valve periodically to prevent it from seizing up.

Outside taps should be isolated in preparation for the winter and drained down to prevent frozen/burst pipes.

GAS

The gas meter is usually outside the property and may be either wall mounted or in a box at ground level.

You will need a meter box key to access the stopcock in the meter box to turn off the gas supply.

Work on the gas installation in your home should only be undertaken by a gas engineer registered on the Gas Safe Register.

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TAKING CARE OF YOUR NEW HOME

During the construction process your home absorbs a lot of water, not only from the elements but also from some of the products e.g., mortar, concrete and plaster. Moisture does need to evaporate slowly and be ventilated away during the initial drying out period.

CONDENSATION

Condensation is caused as water vapour meets cold surfaces and is entirely normal during the drying out period. To keep condensation to a minimum and avoid mould forming you should:

- Cover pans when cooking to reduce steam
- Avoid drying clothes indoors over radiators
- Properly vent tumble dryers to stop moisture spreading through the home
- Use cooker hood/extractor fans
- Keep doors closed when cooking, washing and bathing Ventilate moisture away
- Keep trickle vents open
- Open windows whenever possible
- Open wardrobe doors to allow air to circulate Provide even heating
- If heating is turned off all day, surfaces will be cold and condensation is more likely to form when normal activities, such as cooking and washing are carried out. To prevent this a consistent heating regime needs to be maintained, particularly in the colder months



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CENTRAL HEATING

Water heated by the boiler is pumped around the radiators through pipework that is generally concealed in the floors and walls. Your home has been constructed with fuel efficiency in mind and is well insulated. The timing of central heating and hot water can be set to suit your individual requirements and thermostatic radiator valves can be used to regulate room temperatures. Some homes have separate heating zones, controlled by an additional programmer.

If your home has a hot water cylinder, water heated by the boiler is also circulated through a coil to heat the water in the cylinder, which is then distributed to the hot taps around the home.

Alternatively, your home may have a combination boiler, in which case there will be no hot water cylinder. Water from the rising main is directly heated in the boiler and distributed to the hot taps around the home.

Full operating instructions are provided, but please ask if further assistance is required to achieve the desired settings.

- It is recommended that some background heating is left on during the winter months to prevent any damage caused by frost
- Do not cover vents/flues.

REMEMBER: TO ARRANGE ANNUAL SERVICING OF YOUR BOILER, HOT WATER CYLINDER AND PRESSURE VESSEL AND MAINTAIN A RECORD OF THE SERVICE HISTORY, OTHERWISE YOU WILL NOT BE COVERED UNDER THE INITIAL 2 YEAR BUILDMARK COVER.

DECORATION

To allow the drying out process to take place, your home has been painted using a breathable emulsion. It usually takes nine to twelve months for walls and ceilings to dry out fully and it is advisable to leave any redecoration until after this time. Use decorator's filler to make good any shrinkage cracks that have arisen from the normal drying out process.

New woodwork absorbs a lot of paint or stain, and it is likely you will need to undertake an external redecoration in around two years. Subsequent redecoration will depend on exposure and weather conditions.

EU directives have required the paint industry to reduce the amount of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) emitted through decorative products. As a result, solvent based coatings are not as resistant to discolouration as they were. This can particularly occur where no natural daylight is present but is not considered a defect.

WALL FIXINGS

The type of fixing required will depend on the construction of the wall and the weight of the item.

External walls will generally be solid, built with brick and block or be timber frame with a plasterboard lining. It is important that wall plugs and screws used on these walls penetrate through the plaster or plasterboard, well into the blockwork or timber frame.

Partition walls are typically constructed using a metal or timber framework or studwork, covered with plasterboard. For heavier items you should locate the studwork and screw into it. If there is no stud in the selected position, and the fixing is to carry a relatively light load, you will need a specialist cavity type fixing.

REMEMBER! ALWAYS CHECK FOR HIDDEN PIPES AND CABLES USING A DETECTOR BEFORE DRILLING/NAILING

EXTRACTOR FANS

Grilles do need to be kept clear of dust and debris, so this should form part of your own routine maintenance.

SHRINKAGE

Materials dry out at different rates which may cause small cracks on walls, ceilings, and at joints and corners of skirting boards and other joinery. Please be assured that shrinkage cracking such as this is entirely normal – it is not a defect nor is it structurally significant. We advise an approximate timescale of 18 months for your home to sufficiently settle and dry out. Please note that nail pops and shrinkage below 3mm will not be considered a defect by many developers.

As timber doors and frames shrink, they may 'rattle' or not latch properly. This can be easily remedied at the end of the defect's liability period.

Following the condensation guidelines (page 13) will also help to keep shrinkage to a minimum.

SHOWER ENCLOSURES

Glass panels have a hydrophobic coating aiding 'run-off' of water droplets and reducing the need for frequent cleaning. For best appearance/product life, regular cleaning is recommended.

Clean using mild soap/detergent solutions ONLY. To prevent the build-up of limescale, do not allow water droplets to dry on the glass or frame. After showering, rinse with water, remove droplets using a squeegee on glass panels and wipe frames dry with a soft cloth. Under no circumstances should abrasive, caustic or scouring products be used.

DO NOT use 'spray and leave' type cleaning products. Use of unsuitable products may cause plated/painted finishes to deteriorate.

Should a build-up of limescale occur, remove using a 50:50 solution of white vinegar and water applied with a soft cloth and rinse/dried thoroughly.

Shower enclosure seals are often "push fit" and may over time move. Please ensure these are regularly checked to ensure a watertight seal is maintained.

DRAINS

Drains will block if unsuitable materials such as nappies, sanitary towels, cooking oil and fat are put into the drainage system via the sink or WC.

Even some wipes described as 'flushable' can cause blockages, so do not discard these into the drainage system.

Hair traps on shower wastes should be regularly cleaned out to allow water to drain freely. If basins/showers are not in regular use, it is recommended that you occasionally run a tap to prevent the sink trap drying out, which can cause an unpleasant smell.

Please note that if drains are blocked by inappropriate items, this is NOT a building defect and would not be covered by your warranty provider.

BATH WATER TEMPERATURE

To comply with Building Regulations and prevent scalding, the temperature of your bath water is restricted and will be cooler than water from other taps around the house.

GUTTERS

Gutters, gullies and downpipes should be checked regularly and cleared of leaves and other debris. This is particularly important in the autumn.

emh recommend any inspections/works should be undertaken by a skilled person using appropriate safety equipment.

GARAGES

Garages are designed for the storage of vehicles, and are generally constructed using a single thickness, or skin, of brickwork. They will not necessarily be waterproof, particularly during periods of prolonged driving rain. Rain may also enter under the garage door.

It is not recommended that you use the garage for general household storage.

ROOFS

Modern homes are built with prefabricated trusses designed for each house, of the correct size and strength to support the roof tiles, wind and snow loads.

All roof timbers are necessary for the support of the roof and should not be cut or removed.

Any works carried out on the roof should be undertaken by a skilled person using appropriate safety equipment. Following works such as TV aerial / a installation or window cleaning it is recommended that you check for any damage. Damage caused by a third party is not covered by your warranty provider.

SMOKE DETECTORS

Your new home is fitted with smoke detectors for your protection. These are mains wired with a battery back-up. It is recommended that smoke detectors are tested on a weekly basis.

Batteries should be replaced annually but the unit will emit a high-pitched beep if the battery needs to be replaced. However, please note that some smoke detectors are sealed units and therefore require full replacement if they fail.

Smoke detectors should be dusted/vacuumed regularly to remove accumulated dust.

LOFT SPACE

The structure of the roof has not been designed to take the additional load of stored items, so the loft is not intended to be used as a storage area.

Lofts are very well insulated, but this does mean that safe access may be prevented. As a result, some aerial/satellite fitters may run their cables outside the property, so it is worth checking this in advance.

Condensation can occur on the felt to the underside of the roof as warm moist air from your home meets the cold timber/felt. This will gradually disperse.

We ensure all our loft spaces are well insulated to prevent heat loss and to reduce home energy consumption.

WINDOWS/DOORS

Some windows may form part of your fire escape route and will not therefore be lockable. Windows may have restrictors fitted which must be operated correctly to avoid damage.

Frames and handles should be regularly cleaned internally and externally using a solution of washing up liquid.

Glass is a natural material and may have some slight imperfections and bubbles. It has a soft surface and can scratch easily, so take extra care when cleaning.

Scratched glass is only covered under defects if identified during snagging or the new homes checklist inspection.

Moving parts/locking mechanisms should be checked regularly and lubricated if necessary, using a silicone-based spray. French/bi-fold doors may expand slightly in periods of prolonged hot weather and may be more difficult to open/close.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR NEW HOME — EXTERNAL

EXTERNAL TIMBERS

It is recommended that you initially redecorate any external timber after 12 months.

EFFLORESCENCE

Natural salts coming out of the brickwork may leave a white deposit and is quite normal. It is not harmful and usually disappears over time.

DAMP-PROOF COURSES, AIR BRICKS AND VENTILATION

It is important that the level of soil around your house is kept around 150mm (two brick courses) below the damp proof course to avoid damp penetration.

Air bricks and ventilators should not be blocked or covered.

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DRAINAGE ACCESS/INSPECTION CHAMBERS/RODDING EYES

These provide important access to the below ground drainage system so that any blockages can be cleared and should not therefore be covered, e.g., by turf, soil, decking or paving.

TURF

In the first month, newly laid turf should be soaked daily to avoid shrinkage, especially in the summer months. During hot weather, water early in the morning and again in the evening.

- use a hosepipe and sprinkler and pay attention to edges to ensure they are thoroughly watered
- grass takes in water from its roots only, so turf must be thoroughly soaked each watering
- signs of under-watering are shrinkage gaps between turfs and yellowing/browning of grass.

If joints open between the individual turfs, fill these with a mixture of fine soil and grass seed.

To prevent rutting/depressions forming, avoid walking on turf for the first month, while it becomes established.

Mowing **MUST** be carried out before the grass gets too long at a maximum height of 50mm (2 inches).

PLANTING

Maintenance of planting within your garden is your own responsibility. The success of any new planting will depend on care and all new plants will require regular watering. Water at the base of plants and soak thoroughly rather than give a light sprinkling every day. Replacement of trees or shrubs that have not been maintained is not covered by the warranty.

FENCING

Use a preservative treatment within 12 months and subsequently every two years to prolong the life of your fence. Timber fences are a natural product and variations in colour and finish may occur due to drying/weathering. Damage due to severe weather conditions is not covered under the warranty.

EXTERNAL DRIVEWAYS/ROADS

Final surfacing to driveways and roads is usually carried out in phases and may not be completed at the time you move in. This helps to avoid damage to the surface caused by heavy machinery.

All adoptable roads and sewers are covered by a Section Agreement with a surety bond provided by the warranty provider to ensure they are completed.

Where dropped kerbs are present, a temporary infill strip will allow safe access/egress. These will be removed when the final surfacing is applied, but care should be taken on all temporary surfaces, in all weather conditions, until final surfacing is completed.

Your driveway has been designed for domestic and light commercial vehicles, but heavy vehicles or point loading may cause damage, especially when it has first been laid.

In hot weather, the driveway surface can become soft. Manoeuvring of vehicles, especially with power steering, can cause scuffing and deterioration of the surface. Such damage is not covered under your warranty.

Should a repair be necessary, a repair patch may be carried out in line with industry practice, but the whole area may not be resurfaced.

SITE SAFETY

Construction work may well be ongoing when you move into your new home, and a certain amount of dust and noise is inevitable. We will, of course, make every effort to keep this to a minimum.

Please do not enter, or allow children to enter, construction areas. Please be aware of construction traffic and take care when walking or driving.

Conditions and traffic management systems can and do change. Please take note of any signage for pedestrians and vehicles, as this is there for your safety.

Please be vigilant – safety on site is of paramount importance.





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If you have any questions;
call emh on: 0300 123 0918*
email sales@emh.co.uk
or visit sales.emh.co.uk

*Local call rate