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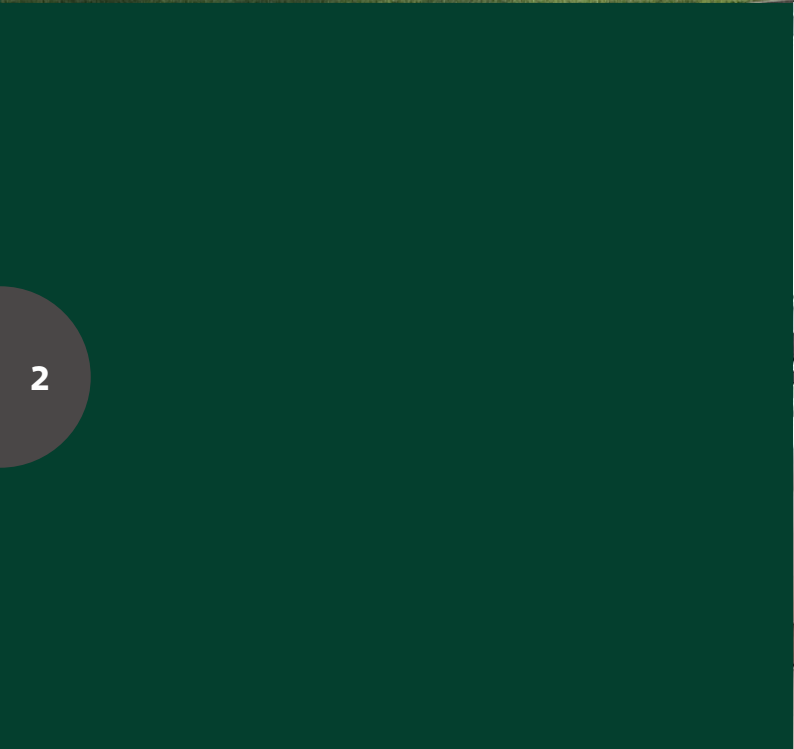
Vico Homes 

Your new home

user guide

Helping you understand your new-build home.





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Welcome to your new home

Moving home is an exciting time but it can be stressful. Proper planning helps things run smoothly and our moving in checklist can help keep track of all the important things you need to do as you start to settle into your new home.

Moving in checklist



Contact the various utility suppliers (gas, water, electricity and telephone). You will need to make sure they are registered in your name.



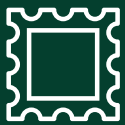
Register any warranties on new products in your home, sometimes there is a limited timeframe to do this.



Read the manuals provided so that you can operate the equipment in your home, such as heating controls.



Moving in checklist continued



Contact Royal Mail to inform them of your new address and set up postage redirection if required.



Call all your insurance providers to inform them of your new address (such as home, travel, pet, car or life insurance).





Contact your local authority (council) for council tax registration and to ensure you are added onto the electoral roll.



Contact your banks to inform them of your new address.



Contact your TV, telephone and media providers to inform them of your new address or to sign up to their services.



Contact TV Licensing and advise them of your new address or sign up for a TV licence.



Let your employer know you have moved home.



Let your children's schools know that you have moved home (if applicable).



Update your address with the DVLA (if applicable).

Your heating system

Most new-build homes are fitted with energy efficient gas-powered central heating and hot water systems. The exact manufacturer and model of boiler should have been discussed with you at your sign up. You should have received an instruction manual and details of your warranty with your handover documents on the day you got the keys to your new home.

The main features of your heating system

Thermostat

Room temperatures are controlled by the thermostat. The instruction manual will advise you how to set the thermostat to the temperature you find most comfortable. You may also find that the thermostat is battery operated, if the screen is blank, please check the batteries and replace.

TRVs

Thermostatic Radiator Valves (TRVs) are a way of turning the temperature of your radiators up and down. They allow for a room temperature to be individually controlled. As such, they are a cost-effective way of improving the efficiency of your heating system and lowering fuel bills.

Radiators

Most heating systems use radiators to circulate heat around your home. As your home is built to lose far less heat than you may have been used to, you may notice that the radiators feel cooler. Running radiators warm rather than hot helps keep your home running efficiently.

If you notice that a radiator is cool at the top, it may indicate that there is air in the system, this is common in new radiators. To release the air, first turn off the heating and allow the system to cool. Attach the radiator key to the bleed valve and turn it anti-clockwise.

As you open the valve slightly, you should hear the hiss of air escaping. It is a good idea to hold a cloth underneath to catch any water. Once the air has stopped escaping, close the valve.

Your heating system may need re-pressurising after bleeding the radiator, your boiler instruction manual should explain how to do this, or alternatively the manufacturer's website should have guides to assist you. Always ensure you have read the instructions and followed guidance on bleeding radiators before contacting us.

Running and maintaining your heating system

To ensure the efficiency of your boiler and heating system we will carry out a Gas Safety Check on your home once a year.

When running your heating system, it is more efficient and less expensive to run the system at a lower heating setting for longer periods of time rather than brief bursts at high heat output.

The comfort level in each room will be determined by the heating and by the use of proper ventilation, such as opening windows to allow air to circulate. It's usually most comfortable when you ventilate the room properly along with a moderate level of background heating.

It is recommended that you set the boiler to a maximum of 60 degrees for hot water. Your water temperature should not need to be set any higher than this.

Ensure that you check the timings set on your thermostat as usually, less heat is required during summer months.



Heating guide

If your heating is not working, please follow the chart below before reporting a fault.





Telecoms and services

TV aerial and / or satellite dish

A television aerial socket should be available in the living room of your new home, the connection for the aerial will be in your loft. You will need to use a qualified professional to install an appropriate aerial and / or dish. If you are moving into your new home from another area, you may need to re-tune your TV. You will need our permission to install a satellite dish.

You can find out more about making changes to your home on our website:

www.vicohomes.co.uk/your-home/making-changes-to-your-home/

Broadband and phone

Cabling for phone lines is usually installed to the front of your property. You will need to pay a provider to install your line, for any hub required and to activate the line.

TV licence

Don't forget to register for a TV licence. If you watch or record 'live' TV on any channel - either through your TV or through a website or app - then you need a TV licence. This applies whether you receive Freesat, Freeview or a pay-TV service in your home.

For more information see: www.tvlicensing.co.uk



Electricals

Solar panels

Your home may be fitted with solar panels. Also known as solar PV (photovoltaic panels). Solar panels generate electricity when sunlight shines on them. The solar PV system is relatively low maintenance.

How it works

The panels installed on the roof of your home will make direct current electricity in daylight.

This is sent to an inverter inside the loft that converts the direct current electricity to alternating current electricity that can be used in your home.

It then goes to a meter often located in the hallway (but not always) to record how much electricity has been produced. From here it goes into the mains electricity for your house. The electricity produced by the system will be used first.

The system does not need to be operated as it is fully automatic.

The most electricity will be generated during daylight hours. This means during the summer months you are likely to see more electricity being produced than in winter months and this will be seen on your monthly energy bills.

Electricity savings

Any savings can't be guaranteed. It is dependent on the number of panels in the system and how much electricity you use in daylight hours. To maximise your savings, make sure you use time clocks to operate appliances such as washing machines, tumble dryers, and dishwashers during the daytime. The more you can alter your lifestyle to have electrical appliances running during daylight, the more you will save on your electricity bills.



Surplus electricity

Any surplus electricity that your solar panels generate that's not used in your home is exported to the National Grid, so that it can be used by another property on the grid. By exporting this electricity, there is less demand on coal burning power stations to generate electricity, meaning less carbon dioxide is being produced.



Maintenance

Your solar panel system shouldn't need much maintenance outside of your regular inspections and yearly cleaning, but there are some red flags to look out for that may indicate your panels require maintenance sooner than scheduled.

The best indicator that the solar panels need maintenance is a reduction in energy output. If you suddenly notice that the solar panels aren't producing as much energy as they normally do and that your electricity bill has gone up, it's a good sign that you should schedule a service appointment. Please get in touch with us about this.

Electric supply

Your home will already have an electricity supply but you must ensure you sign up with a supplier of your choice. Make sure that it is an approved supplier and shop around to get the best value.

The electricity meter box should be found on an external wall of your property and you should have been given a key for access to the meter. Make sure to take a meter reading on your move in day and send this to the electricity supplier that you sign up to.


Consumer unit

Your home will be fitted with a consumer unit (fuse box). The fuse box controls all the lighting and power circuits within your home. Each circuit is protected by a residual current breaker or RCD. These breakers are easy to reset by flicking the switch back to the on position. Circuit breakers are generally more sensitive than fuses and may well trip out even when a light bulb fails, or you are using an appliance with an electrical fault or faulty plug. This is designed to happen as a protection device and should not cause concern.

Each of the circuits in your property is on a separate circuit breaker and will be clearly labelled. When one of the circuit breakers 'trips out', it can easily be identified as the one showing 'OFF'.

If you think there is a fault, please get in touch with us on 0345 8 507 507.





If it “trips out” again please do the following:

Electrical fault

- Turn off all appliances or lights in the affected circuit.
- Reset the switch on the board to 'ON'.
- If it still will not reset, unplug all of the appliances on the circuit.
- Turn back on all of the lights or appliances one by one.
- If the miniature circuit breaker (MCB) 'trips out' again as you turn back on an appliance or light, it will mean that the appliance or light is faulty and is causing the circuit breaker to trip out.
- If this happens, turn off the light and replace the bulb or turn off and unplug the appliance that caused the circuit breaker to trip and again reset the MCB. You will then be able to continue to use the remaining lights and / or appliances on that circuit.

Please take care to ensure that any electrical appliance you use is suitable for connection to a 240-volt 50 cycle AC supply. Ensure it is safe and in good working order and that a fuse of an appropriate rating is installed in the plug of the appliance. If you have doubts about any appliance, please seek advice from a qualified electrician.

Electrical wiring

All electrical wiring has been run and installed in accordance with the latest electrical regulations.

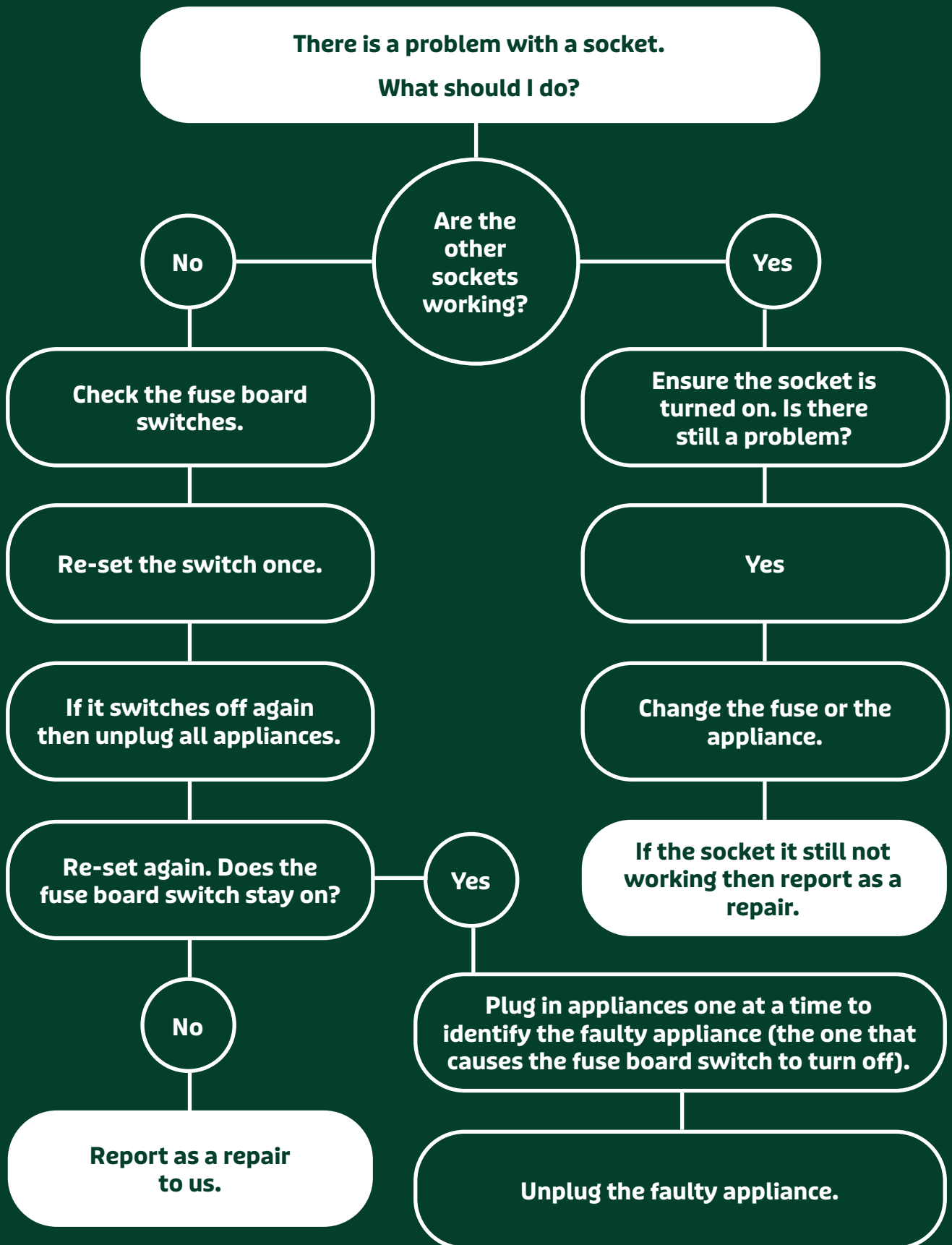


Do not attempt to interfere with the consumer unit, fittings or appliances in any other way. Electricity is dangerous and should only be dealt with by qualified people. If unsure, please contact us on 0345 8 507 507.



Electric socket guide

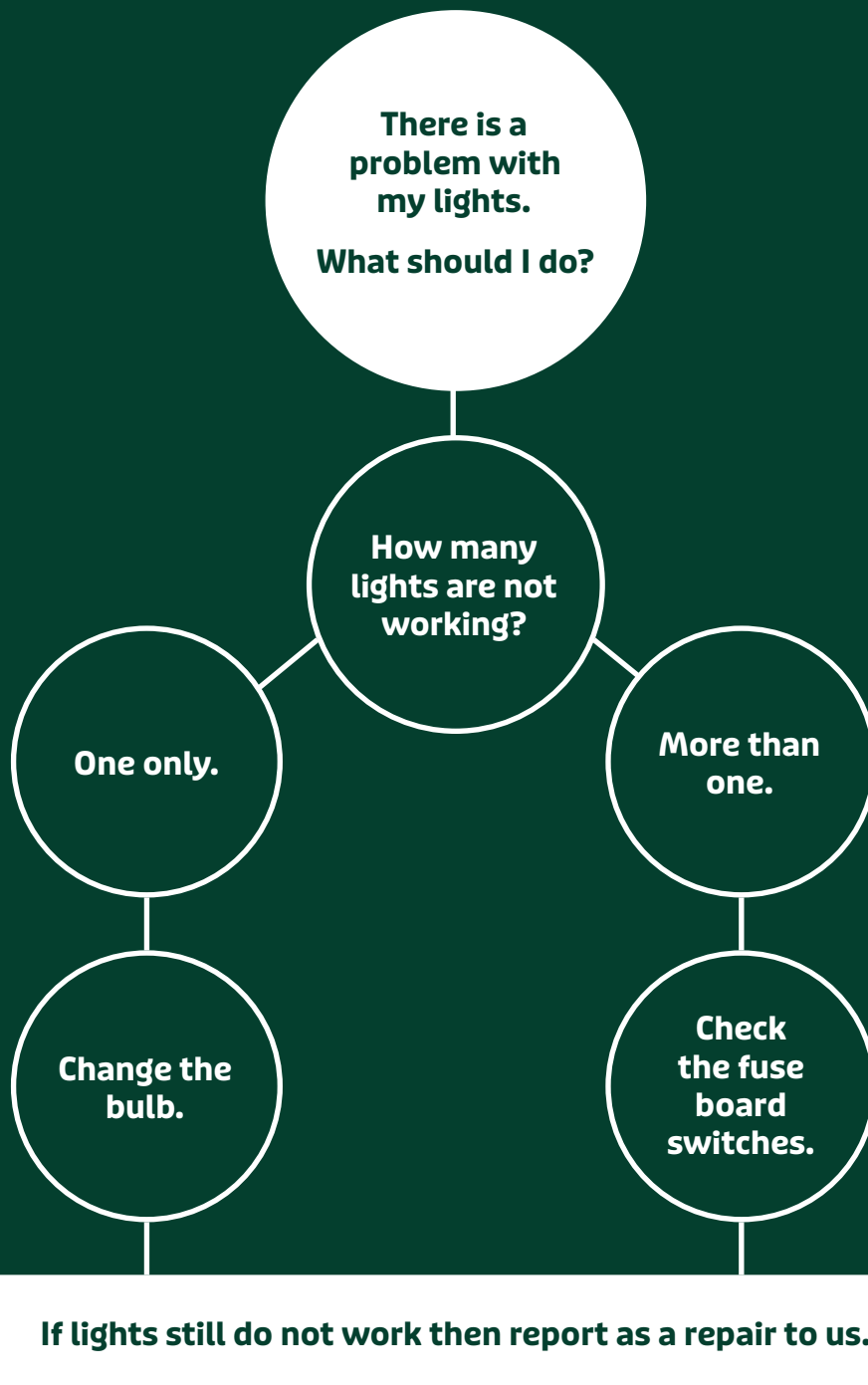
If an electrical socket does not work, please, follow the chart below before reporting a fault.





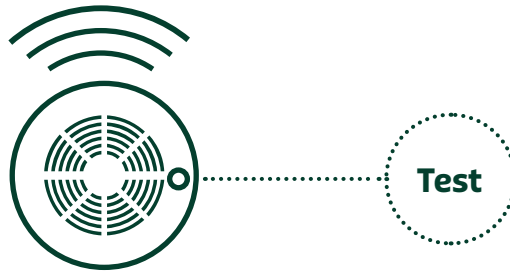
Lighting guide

If your lighting is not working, please follow the chart below before reporting a fault.





Smoke detectors



Your home has been fitted with a smoke and heat detector alarms for your safety.

Smoke Alarms:

One smoke alarm has been installed on each storey containing living accommodation. Positioned within 7.5m of every habitable room door, including bedrooms, living rooms, and kitchens and in circulation areas like hallways and landings.

Heat Alarms:

Heat alarms are mandatory in kitchens and have been interconnected with the smoke alarms.

All smoke and heat alarms are interconnected to ensure that if one alarm is triggered, all alarms sound, providing an audible warning throughout the dwelling for your safety and have been hard wired into the property. These units are tamper proof, and you will need to test them on a regular basis.

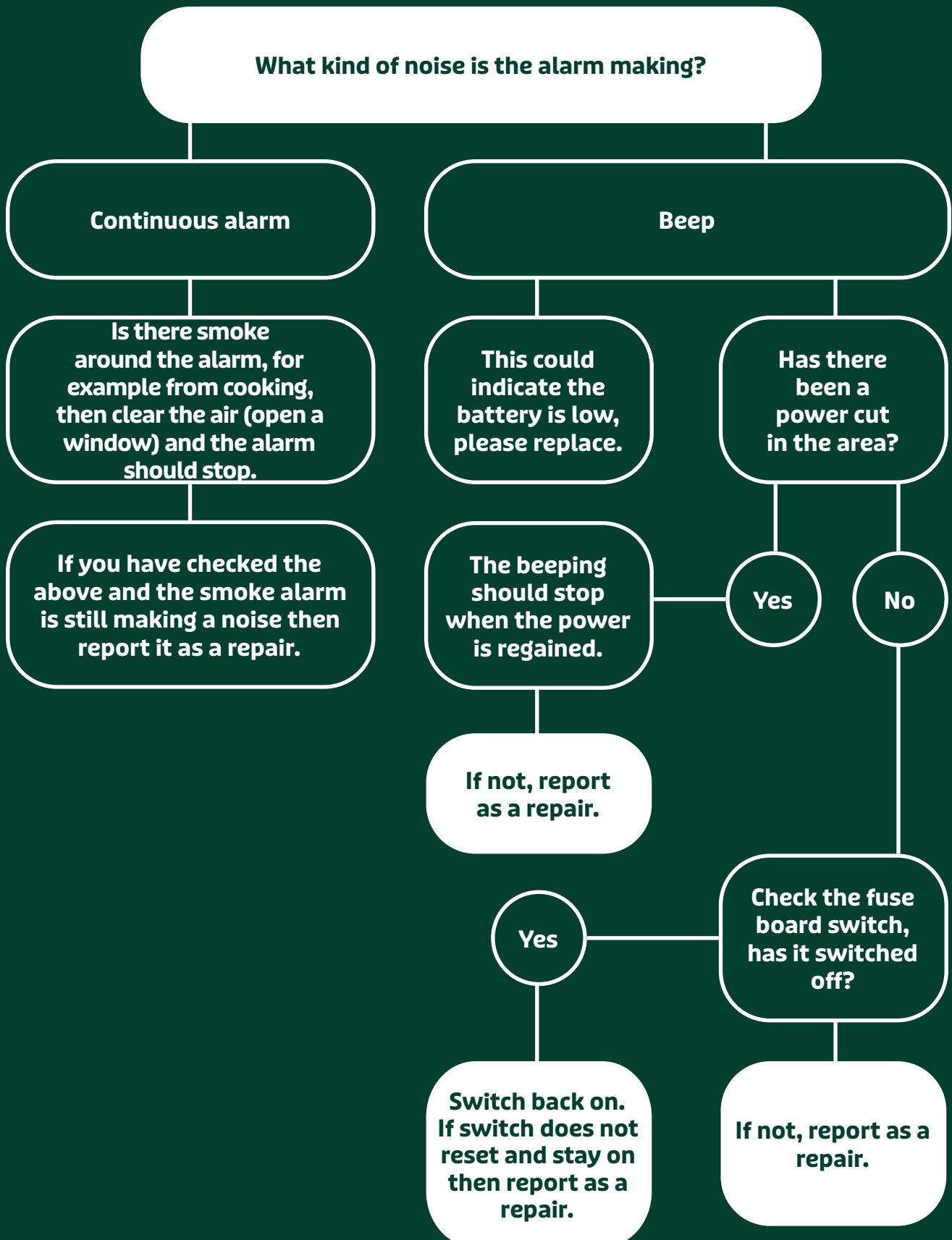
Information is contained within your handover pack provided by your housing officer..



Vacuuming the outside of the alarm from time-to-time will help avoid false alarms caused by dust. Smoke detectors have been installed to alert you to a possible serious situation. Do not switch the smoke detector off at the consumer unit except in an emergency.

Smoke alarm guide

Follow the chart below before reporting a fault.





Ventilation

Preventing condensation and mould

Condensation is formed when steam or water vapour in a room touches a cold surface causing the steam to turn to water.

Condensation can be caused by:

- Water vapour release from the building material. This process can last up to 12 months until the property is fully dried out.
- Lots of water vapour in your home, including from cooking, showering or the vapour we all breathe out.
- Lots of cold surfaces where the vapour can condense.
- Heating being too low.
- Ventilation systems being switched off.

Condensation can cause damage to clothes, bedding, floor coverings, decorations and the fabric of the building if mould growth takes hold on walls and ceilings. Homes that are heated and ventilated appropriately will have less problems.

Poor levels of ventilation along with excess moisture in the indoor air can contribute to mould growth, so it is important to use the ventilation provided to keep your home 'fresh' and to remove moisture at source, particularly from shower rooms, bathrooms and kitchens.



To limit excess moisture in the indoor air and condensation in your home, the following tips may be helpful:

- Avoid drying clothes indoors, especially on radiators.
- If you have one, make sure your tumble dryer's venting duct leads outside (unless it is a self-condensing dryer).
- Reduce moist air spreading around your home by using local extractor fans and keeping internal doors closed when cooking, bathing, or showering.

Practical tips on using ventilation:

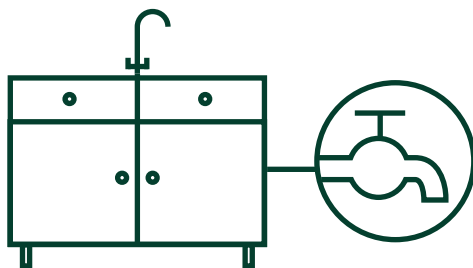
- Trickle vents should be open to provide background ventilation. They can be closed to limit cold draughts at certain times, or within rooms you are not using and heating, but remember to open them again.
- For local mechanical extractor fans, the ventilation inlet and outlets should be checked regularly to ensure they are not blocked. They should be maintained by a professional installer.
- The filter within a cooker extract hood must be changed regularly, to help keep the hood extractor operating efficiently.

Cold water

Your home will have a water stopcock. This is generally located underneath your kitchen sink or in your downstairs toilet, if you have one. You should have been advised where this is on your sign up.

Your water supply will be metered. Most water meters are located externally however some may be inside. Internal meters can be found under the kitchen sink, in an airing cupboard or in a bathroom usually behind a toilet. External meters can be found immediately outside the boundary of the property that they serve, in the ground in a chamber with a lid.

You will need to supply a meter reading to the water company when you call them to register your home.



If you have a burst or leak in your house, please shut off your water supply and contact us on 0345 8 507 507.



Gas

Your home is fitted with a gas meter, located on an external wall of your property. You should sign up with an approved supplier as soon as possible. You can choose which company you wish to supply gas and we advise you to shop around to get good value.

Your gas shut off valve is in your gas meter cupboard. If you have a gas cooker and / or hob, we will conduct a Gas Safety Check once a year by a qualified Gas Safe registered engineer to check your appliances are safe to use.

The gas meter location will have been shown to you during your new home demonstration visit and a meter reading taken.

If you smell gas or suspect you have a gas leak you must:

- turn off the gas at the meter at ground floor or the emergency valve;
- extinguish all sources of ignition;
- do not smoke;
- do not operate any electrical light or power switches;
- do not use any phones inside the property;
- open doors and windows to ventilate the property.

If you suspect a gas leak, call National Grid emergency number immediately on 0800 111 999.

If you are concerned or you think the fault is due to the electrical installation, please report this to us 0345 8 507 507.

Your doors and windows

Doors

All glazing used in your front entrance door is either laminated or toughened security glass. The locking mechanism uses an 'espagnolette' lock which engages the frame in three different places. To engage the lock, the handle must be raised up into place so that the locks engage the locking points. The handle of the door must be in this position before it can be locked with a key. All internal doors are fitted to a standard size and you may need to arrange for these to be shaved depending on the floor coverings you have installed. This is your responsibility.

Windows

All windows in your home will meet Secured by Design specifications and will be UPVc double or triple-glazed. Windows have stainless steel, easy to clean hinges, with shoot bolt locking, and a sash white locking handle. Some upstairs windows are fitted with restrictor stays, preventing the window from opening fully. Use of the window restrictors should be shown at your new home demonstration. All windows have trickle ventilation to comply with ventilation strategies. All windows are fully maintainable from the inside.

Care and maintenance of windows

- Remove any rings and bracelets before hand washing the windows.
- Any household glass cleaner may be used with a soft cloth.
- It is recommended that heavy external grime is removed with soap and water.
- To clean the frames avoid using all solvent based or abrasive cleaners. Use soap and water every four months to remove any dirt.

To find out more about checking the condition of your windows visit the NHBC website.

nhbc-standards.co.uk/9-finishes/9-1-a-consistent-approach-to-finishes/9-1-6-glazing/



We recommend that you familiarise yourself and practise the operation of windows so that in a real emergency you could use them as an escape route.

Kitchens and appliances

Your home may have a gas or electric hob and cooker. Your kitchen will also be fitted with an electric extractor fan. You should have received operating instructions for all your appliances on your completion day. Ensure that you register your warranty and follow the operating instructions. Trouble shooting guidance may also be available on the appliance manufacturer's website. Appliances are not covered under the building warranty, any issues with your kitchen appliances will need to be logged with the manufacturer under their warranty. **This is your responsibility.**

Electric spur switches

Provision for installation of equipment such as a washing machine and fridge / freezer will have been made where possible. This will consist of a low level plug socket below the worktop, which is operated from a switched spur above the worktop. For example, a washing machine should be plugged into a socket below the worktop and you can use the fuse spur located above the worktop marked "washing machine" to control the power to the machine. You will not need to switch the socket off below the work surface. This feature may be particularly useful if you were to cut off electricity from a fridge / freezer to allow easy defrosting without having to pull the fridge away from the wall.

Washing machine fitting

The water connections for the washing machine are under the kitchen sink. A waste adaptor is attached to the sink waste pipework inside the sink unit. It is necessary, however, to ensure you cut the blank end of the spriggit connector before you connect the washer waste to it. If there is no hole cut out for the waste pipe and electrical socket, you will need to arrange for this to be done.

White goods

Before buying white goods, please refer to the energy labelling scheme, so you can make sure you choose appliances with the best energy efficiency.



All new appliances should only be installed by professionals with the relevant qualifications (NIEEC registered for electricians and Gas Safe for plumbers).

Care and maintenance of kitchens

Carcasses and back panels

Do not polish the laminate or use bleach, scouring powder, multi-surface cleaners or abrasive pads. A damp cloth with soapy water will clean off most spills. Concentrated juices, corrosive liquids and food colourants must be wiped off immediately.

Drawer boxes

When necessary, clean with a damp cloth. Do not use bleach, abrasive pads or scouring powder.

Wall units

Do not position any appliance which creates large amounts of heat or steam underneath a wall unit, such as kettles, as excessive heat or moisture can damage unit carcasses and doors.

Worktops

Although worktops are very hard wearing, a chopping board should be used at all times to prevent scratching by sharp knives. Do not place hot pans or utensils directly on top of the worktop - always use a heat resistant mat or trivet.

When cleaning, a damp cloth will mop up most spills. Corrosive liquids, food colourants and concentrated juices should be wiped off immediately.

Your home

Parking

You will be informed of your parking space(s) during your sign up.

Please ensure you only use your allocated spaces and do not block your neighbours' access.

Keys

When taking over your new home you will be provided with all the necessary keys. With a new build home you generally have three keys for each door. All windows are fitted with window locks, which are all operated from the same key. Window lock keys are left within your house.

Wall fixings

The type of fixing you should use to attach items to walls depends on the construction of the wall and weight of the item. Pictures and other light items can be hung on most types of walls using steel picture hooks or masonry nails. When fitting picture hooks in your home, make sure you don't knock or drill a wall near to electrical sockets and fittings (if in doubt, check). **Please also check for any wiring or pipework (gas or water) before carrying out any works.**

Masonry (blockwork) walls

Heavier items can be fixed using wall plugs and screws. You should ensure that the wall plug and screw penetrate through the plaster, well into the block.

Metal - MF stud internal walls

You may find that some of the walls in your home sound hollow. If you wish to fix light shelving etc to them, a special fixing is required. These can be purchased from any good DIY store. There are two types of fixings available on the market, a toggle type fixing and a self-screw fixing. These fixings are only designed for light use.

Decorating

We have painted the walls with emulsion paint. Further coats of emulsion and oil-based paints or wallpaper can be used for later redecoration, once the walls have dried out (this normally takes nine to twelve months). When you redecorate, use decorator's filler to make good any minor gaps and plaster cracks, which have arisen from drying out and shrinkage, this is a normal occurrence. If, later on, you want to remove wallpaper from a wall with a plasterboard finish, avoid scraping too vigorously; otherwise the surface may be damaged.



Water saving tips

In the kitchen

- Always wash a full load of clothes and use the economy setting if your machine has one. If you use a washing powder and find that this does not fully dissolve on the economy setting, try using a washing liquid instead.
- If you are gasping for a cup of tea, you will get one quicker if you only boil the amount you need. It will save electricity, too. Jug-type kettles need less water as they have smaller elements.
- Instead of washing and preparing vegetables under a running tap, fill a bowl of water or part fill the sink.
- Always wash up in a bowl or the sink rather than under a running tap and use another bowl or sink full of clean water to rinse. Use both sides of a double sink if you have one.

In the bathroom

- Checking the temperature of your bath as it fills reduces the amount of water you use and cold water you have to add.
- Have showers instead of baths if possible, as an ordinary shower uses only two-fifths of the water needed for a bath.
- Always use the plug when washing your hands and do not clean your teeth with the tap running.
- When cleaning the bathroom, turn the tap on only when you are ready to rinse down. You will use less water by filling a bucket or washing up bowl instead of rinsing the cloth under running water.





Vinyl floors

Cleaning and maintaining vinyl flooring is relatively hassle free and requires a small amount of regular upkeep. Follow these hints and tips to keep your floor looking its best:

Do

- keep vinyl flooring away from fire and naked flames to maintain maximum safety;
- use bicarbonate of soda to clean up tough stains;
- ensure you regularly Hoover or sweep with a soft brush, any loose debris, dust and dirt;
- use felt pads on furniture such as table legs and chair legs or castors to avoid causing indentations on the vinyl. The added cushioning will protect the surface of your vinyl too; and
- keep pets' nails trimmed to avoid damage to your vinyl.

Don't

- push, pull or drag heavy furniture across your vinyl flooring as this can mark, scratch and damage the surface. Instead, always lift or wheel in any sofas, tables or chairs, as this will prevent scuffing and other marks;
- use abrasive scourers;
- leave large pools of water for long periods of time as this can damage the floor and present a potential slip hazard;
- use harsh cleaning products as warm water and a light soap will usually be enough to remove stains. Products like bicarbonate of soda can also be handy on a tough stain; and
- wear high heels on your vinyl floor as this can leave indentations that cannot be removed.

When vinyl comes into contact with rubber for prolonged periods it causes a chemical reaction that leaves a permanent yellow stain that cannot be removed.

Be aware that common household items such as bicycle and pram wheels, latex or rubber backed mats and rugs, and the soles of shoes and slippers may contain rubber and should not be left standing on a vinyl floor for prolonged periods.

Caring for your new garden

Your new lawn

Your brand new lawn has been laid on a bed of at least 100mm of topsoil approved to British standards. As your lawn is a living plant there are a few simple steps to follow to help it keep looking its best. Your garden is your responsibility to maintain, and the first few weeks and months will require you to consider two main elements, watering and mowing.

Keep off the grass

You should not walk on the lawn in the first few weeks. As a rule you should leave your lawn to take root for three weeks between April and October and as long as six weeks between November to March. If you walk on the lawn in the first few weeks it is more than likely the lawn will become bumpy and uneven. If you aren't sure, you can test by pressing on the lawn to see whether the ground below is firm enough to take your weight without making impressions. If you do have to walk across the lawn to transport things, consider placing some boards over the new turf to use as a walkway.

Watering

Keep the new lawn well-watered (normally daily, but this does of course depend on conditions), especially for the first month or so. During hot spells, or periods of drought, water early in the morning or early evening where possible. This allows the water to get to the grass roots before the sun evaporates it. You need to ensure you use enough water to reach the underlying soil this will allow the roots to grow strong and reach deep into the soil for healthy growth.

If the grass shows signs of drying out, or the edges of the turf begin to gap, the lawn is not getting enough water - increase the amount significantly.

If the lawn becomes a soggy sponge, you are probably overwatering. You should ease off with the watering a little and perhaps don't water at all for a day or so if it's really soggy.

Whilst the lawn needs to be kept watered, you also want to encourage nice strong, deep roots. Overwatering makes the lawn lazy - it won't grow strong, deep roots because it doesn't have to. If the lawn is permanently waterlogged, the roots will be starved of oxygen, and go yellow. In extreme cases, this results in the grass dying.

Over the first three to four weeks you should see the lawn begin to establish. The lawn will start to knit together, and the grass will start to grow. As this happens, water it less frequently. It is better to water thoroughly every two to three days than to water a little, daily.

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

Mowing

Don't be too hasty to mow your new lawn (although please don't wait until it becomes a jungle!). The blades of grass should be at least 25mm in height, and the lawn should look like it is knitting together well. Exactly how long this takes will depend on the weather and general growing conditions. Typically, it will be around three weeks after laying, although it can be less in spring and early summer.

Mow the new lawn with the mower set on a high setting for the first cut. If a close cut is required, gradually reduce the mowing height over time. Make sure you throw away all your grass cuttings so your new lawn can get the sunlight it needs. If you feel your feet are sinking, stop immediately and let the ground dry and become firm.

New grass grows quickly and cutting will be required every seven days or so initially.

Top dressing and feeding

Feeding your lawn will help it stay healthy and new lawns will benefit from a first feed after two or three months. Before you apply the feed, make sure you read the instructions as too much feed can scorch your lawn and even kill it. When feeding look out for signs of pests or disease and apply moss killer if needed.

You may experience some natural settlement of the lawn, and this can create isolated dips and hollows. This is normal. You can resolve this by top dressing using horticultural sand mixed with silt / clay / loam along with grass seed to repair any wear and tear.

In the winter months your garden may become boggy. Once the drier spring weather arrives, your lawn will return to normal. To give it a boost we recommend you aerate the lawn in spring, top dress and seed areas where patches have formed and remove any leaves that have fallen onto the grass.

You can also maintain and improve your lawn with the addition of specialist weed and feed product in the spring and autumn.

Plants and trees

Any plants or trees in your garden are your responsibility to maintain once you move into your new home. Look after them well with plenty of water and appropriate plant food and they should start to flourish.

You will need permission from us before planting any trees within your garden. New trees and shrubs can make your garden more attractive however they will take moisture from the soil so be careful when planting. We recommend obtaining expert advice to allow enough room for trunks and large roots to grow safely and be particularly careful if you are planting near walls or drains.

We have a robust tree management service that looks after trees located on Vico Homes property including any trees that may be located around where you live. In the first instance our priority is to manage any risks that may be associated with our trees and so we would ask that you don't prune or cut down trees yourself. For any tree related queries, please visit our website or contact us.



Guide to defects

All of our newly built homes are of high quality and each one passes strict guidelines set by warranty providers, such as LABC, NHBC and Premier Guarantee. However, we understand that not every home can be perfect and small issues do sometimes arise. We will always try and put things right and it helps us firstly to establish whether the problem is a defect or another type of issue. This helps us ensure we find the right solution to the problem with your home.

A new home is an individually built, handcrafted product. For this reason, there will inevitably be some variation in the finished appearance of different elements of the construction, due to the nature of the materials used and the way in which they are applied. This is normal and to be expected.

All new homes require a running in period and are subject to tolerances in building processes which are agreed across the building industry. More information is contained in the Buildings Warranty Guide which you will receive when move into the property.

Your home has a developer warranty period which could be 12 or 24 months. This means that any defect that requires a repair within the warranty period will be undertaken by the developer. All possible defects in the first instance will need to be reported to the Aftercare Team. At the end of your warranty period, we will write to you to arrange a defect inspection by our Clerk of Works to ensure that all defects have been rectified and you are happy in your new home.

What is a defect?

A 'defect' is something in a newly built home that doesn't work as expected, such as an external door that has dropped and is unable to be secured.

What is not a defect?

Items which generally do not fall into the category as a defect repair include:

- loss of water, electricity or gas - check with the utility supplier that there has been no interruption to the service;
- smelling gas - report this to the National Gas on 0800 111 999 and make sure to let us know as we'll send a inspector for a final check once everything has been made safe;
- third party damage such as wear and tear or vandalism;
- alarm / fire / smoke alarms not working - only report this if the manual has been checked and the fault still remains;
- settlement cracks up to 2mm; and
- damages that are not identified on or before the day you move in.

Are you wanting to make changes to your home?

You have the right to improve your home but you must first get our permission in writing. While we won't unreasonably refuse permission for improvements or changes, we may impose conditions.

If you want to make improvements, you must fill out our Home Improvement Application form. You can find this on our website or at one of our hubs.



Reporting and response times to defects

Post handover (12 month defects) – aftercare		Responsibility
Is the customer satisfied with the rectification?		Aftercare
Yes	No	
Vico Homes / Developer	Vico Homes / Developer	Vico Homes / Developer
The Aftercare Team will complete a resident survey within two months of you moving into the home. This is to gain a better understanding about your views on your property and the wider development. The results will be shared with our project manager for the scheme and any relevant service area that may need to be aware of something raised in your response.		Insight Team
Six weeks before the end of the warranty period, the Aftercare Team will contact you about your property and any defects remaining. They will make arrangements for a final defects inspection to be carried out.		Clerk of Works
The inspection will be carried out by the Employer's Agent and our Clerk of Works. An agent for the developer may also be present.		Clerk of Works / Employer's Agent
The Employer's Agent and Clerk of Works will re-inspect your home once the contractor has confirmed the defects have been rectified.		Clerk of Works / Employer's Agent

Frequent defect requests - checklist examples

Description	Is a defect	Is not a defect
Shrinkage cracks - all new buildings will need time to settle and dry out. This can cause shrinkage cracks. Most of these are minor and can be dealt with when you redecorate.	If a crack is larger than the edge of a pound coin by the end of the warranty period. This will be identified during the defects inspection and added to the remaining works required.	If you cannot place the edge of a pound coin into the crack, this is not a defect.
Decoration		<p>Your new home is fully decorated; however you may find the odd pencil mark, patch or sticky dot on the walls or ceiling.</p> <p>You can easily remove pencil marks with an eraser and peel off sticky dots.</p>
Floor coverings	Where floor coverings are provided they are covered by the defects period if found to be faulty.	Any floor coverings that you supply to your home are your responsibility. These will not be covered by the New Build warranty.
Nail pops - The settlement of the building materials used to construct your home often leads to raised, round bumps on ceiling and walls. Commonly known as 'nail pops' these bumps are caused by the screws that hold the plasterboard in place standing proud of the surface as a result of the drying out process.	If there is a run of nail pops they will be added to the end of defect inspection. A lot of nail pops in one room may indicate a structural fault and need to be reported (with photographic evidence).	Generally not considered to be a defect.

Frequent defect requests - checklist examples

Description	Is a defect	Is not a defect
<p>Condensation - All new homes dry out from the build process; this is perfectly normal.</p> <p>All new homes meet strict requirements for air-tightness and have either extractor fans and / or mechanical heat recovery ventilation (MVHR) systems that are designed to help with air exchange and prevent condensation.</p>		<p>You must ensure your extraction unit is switched on and working. Mould takes at least 12 to 24 hours to form, we would advise to wash it down with a weak bleach solution and ventilate your property. If mould and damp is left to form in the property, this has a potential impact on health - please see our support and guidance on damp and mould in the home user guide.</p>
Leaks	<p>Leaks from waste or water pipes may be a defect.</p> <p>Please isolate the valves in this instance and report immediately.</p>	<p>Any leaks that occur due to your appliances not being fitted correctly are your responsibility.</p>
Blocked drains / toilets		<p>If a blockage occurs and this turns out to be a blockage caused by something other than standard toilet paper you may be charged a call out fee by us.</p>
Appliances	<p>If integrated appliances are fitted as part of the new home, we advise that you ensure you have registered their warranties.</p> <p>Any product faults should be covered by the warranty.</p>	<p>If the fault is with your domestic appliances, the repair responsibility lies with you. Either contact a local appliance repair centre or refer to the product manufacturer. Appliances are not covered under the New Build warranty.</p>

Reporting and response times to defects

Description	Is a defect	Is not a defect
Light fittings	Ensure you follow the trouble shooting guide in this brochure before reporting any light fitting faults to us.	If a light bulb has blown this is not a defect. Please ensure you change any light bulbs (including exterior lights) before reporting any issues.
Boiler	Always ensure you follow the boiler instruction manual before contacting us.	See instruction manual. Occasionally you may be required to re-pressurise your boiler.
Thermostat	May be incorrectly wired.	See instruction manual. If the thermostat is battery operated, you are responsible for replacing the batteries.
Radiators	Should the troubleshooting guide fail to solve the issue with your radiators. Contact us for more information and advice.	You are responsible for bleeding radiators. Instructions are shown on page 8.
TV and media		Any problems with TV, telephones or broadband are between you and your provider, we will not attend calls for these items.
Stiff door or window handles		This is common with new doors and windows and should ease with use. Cleaning hinges and using a silicone lubricant can help.
Lost keys		We do not keep spare keys, if you lose your keys you are responsible for replacing them and / or replacing the lock.

Vico Homes



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Vico Homes Limited

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