

# HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE

New Road Triangle



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# Looking After Your Home



## Inside Your Home

The following list identifies items that should be considered for regular cleaning and testing around your home. For specific guidance on the frequency of cleaning, servicing and maintenance please refer to the appropriate sections of this handbook and the separate manufacturers' literature.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and should not be relied upon as the only tasks or events to be considered.

Item	Suggested action
Floor coverings	Clean all surfaces
Glazing and window frames	Clean frames and glazing both inside and outside but only where the windows are accessible and when using safe equipment
Smoke and heat detectors	Clean and test units
Doors	Clean surfaces and lubricate hinges
Cooker extract	Clean filters
Ventilation	Clean grills and filters
Kitchen appliances	Clean and maintain in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions
Water isolators	Ensure that they turn freely



## Fitted Furniture

All fitted furniture such as kitchens and bathroom units should be cleaned regularly using appropriate cleaning materials and methods, in order to avoid permanent damage.

## Floors

Where floors in kitchens and bathrooms are finished with vinyl sheet, they should be cleaned with warm water and a neutral detergent, keeping the amount of water used to a minimum. Heavy-duty cleaners, scouring pads and strong soap solutions should not be used. Only damp cloth should be used to clean wood flooring through the property.

## Lighting

Low energy light fittings are provided throughout your home. It is important to ensure that the bulbs used in light fittings do not exceed the rating for that fitting. We recommend that you take the used bulb with you when purchasing a replacement – this will help ensure you buy the correct type. Please note – not all lampshades will be suitable for low energy light fittings.

Where sealed LED units (i.e. where the LED bulb cannot be removed and replaced without removing the whole light fitting) are installed, their replacement must be carried out by a competent and qualified electrician. This is to be arranged by the leaseholders, or if replacement is necessary during the defect rectification period or in rented properties, by notifying your management company.

## Tripping Switches in the Consumer Units

If an electrical circuit fails, an MCB in the consumer unit (*please see Getting Started in your new home – Utilities and Metering, p. 5*) may switch to the 'OFF' position, for example if a bulb blows. If this happens you should follow the procedure below:

- 1 Check using a torch whether the light circuit miniature circuit breaker (MCB) is in the 'OFF' position.
- 2 Switch the MCB to the 'ON' position.
- 3 Identify the faulty bulb.
- 4 It is important to then switch 'OFF' the MCB.
- 5 Replace the faulty bulb safely.
- 6 Switch MCB to the 'ON' position.



Pedestal Light

If there is no faulty bulb apparent or if the MCB will not stay ON, you may need to seek further assistance from a qualified electrician. If this occurs during your defects period, please contact Lampton Homes.

## Sanitary Fittings and Taps

The WC's cistern has been fitted with a dual flush facility to minimise the water usage. The smaller button will provide a brief flush when depressed and the larger button will provide a greater flush using more water. Please use as appropriate.

Your sanitary ware is generally in vitrified clay ware. This is a porcelain type product, which has a hard-wearing glazed surface.

There are a range of non-aggressive cleaners and mousses, which will keep all your sanitary ware in a clean and hygienic condition. You should avoid harsh abrasives and cleaning pads as these will score the surface of the sanitary ware, dull and scour the glaze and allow bacteria to build up in the scoured surface.

Whilst clay ware & plastic will resist light or soft objects (such as toothbrushes, razors etc.) normally found in the bathroom, being dropped into them, they will not resist heavy or sharp objects such as tools, screwdrivers, heavy pots etc. Either the clay ware will chip or the plastic will scratch. Similarly standing in the bath wearing shoes will cause grit to scour the bottom of the bath and should be avoided.

If using tools in the vicinity of the sanitary ware, remember always to protect the surfaces with appropriate layers of soft material overlain by a board to prevent impact damage. Do not stand in or sit on the edge of washbasins as the unit and its fixings will not withstand such treatment. Because it is often warm and wet in the bathroom, you may find over a period of time that black mould may appear in the area of the mastic pointing (the flexible sealant applied to where the shower tray and bath join the wall). This may be prevented by regularly using suitable cleaning products on the mastic, in order to discourage mould growth.

## Saving Water

Why not try out a few of the below tips to limit your water usage.

- Always use a watering can to water the plants or wash your car
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth
- Take a shower instead of a bath
- Use a bowl when rinsing and washing dishes
- Don't wait for the water to cool – always keep a jug of cool water in the fridge

Why not try out a few of the below tips to limit your water usage.

- Take a shower, not a bath – Saves up to 45 litres
- Brush your teeth with the tap off – Saves up to 9 litres
- Fixing a dripping tap – Saves up to 20 litres
- Use washing machine on half load – Saves up to 10 litres
- Wash your car with a bucket, not a hose – Saves up to 500 litres

From [www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk)

([https://www.which.co.uk/static/flash/GreenHome/reports/use\\_less\\_water.htm](https://www.which.co.uk/static/flash/GreenHome/reports/use_less_water.htm))

# Outside Your Home

## Communal and External Areas

The upkeep and maintenance of communal and external areas are the responsibility of the management company.

## Windows and doors

Internal faces of the windows can be cleaned safely from inside your property and will be the responsibility of the tenant. Internal faces of glazing should be cleaned periodically using a soft cloth and only warm water with a light detergent. All excess water must be squeezed off to ensure no streaking or future staining. Internal frame surfaces need to be cleaned periodically to ensure decorative and protective properties are retained.

Cleaning of the external face of windows, and the internal faces of windows in communal areas, is the responsibility of your management company.

## Patios and Balconies

Patios and balconies should require minimal maintenance. Scrubbing/sweeping with clean, soapy, warm water should be enough to maintain a clean patio / balcony.



# Defects, Repairs and Maintenance



## Defects Liability Period

The contractor who carried out the construction is responsible for addressing faults in their work for a period of twenty four months from the date the property was completed. This is known as the defects liability period. The twenty four months (2 years) defects liability period for this property runs from 18th October 2024 until 18th October 2026.

If you encounter any problems with your home during this time, just get in touch with the Lampton Homes and we will work with the contractor to put things right. Faults that do not materially prejudice the occupation of your home will be dealt with at the end of the defects liability period.

Just before the end of the Defects Liability period we will get in touch with you to arrange for the End of Defects Inspection. During this inspection you can point out any remaining defects, which will be noted and will be scheduled to be rectified at a convenient time arranged with you (typically during weekday working hours).

Please see “Defects Categories” and “Items Not Classified as Defects” below for information on what constitutes a defect, and what is not classed as a defect. Also please note that the contractor is not responsible for repairs caused by negligence, wear and tear, accident or residents’ own work to the property. Alterations to fixtures, fittings and finishes will invalidate the developer’s responsibility for addressing faults.

## Reporting a Defect and Requesting Repairs

To report a defect during the Defects Liability Period, or to request a repair, please ensure you contact Lampton homes. Please do not contact the developer / contractor directly, as they will be unable to accept the notification, leading to delay or failure to resolve the defect.



## General Notes

Please help us and be safe:

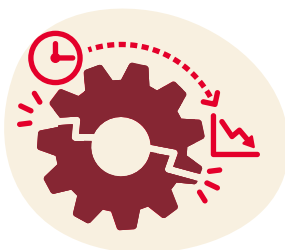
- Report emergency defects straight away
- If there is a water leak, turn off the water supply
- If there is an electrical problem, turn off the power at the mains switch (providing it is safe to do so)

If any damage or alterations you have carried out yourself have caused the problem then we must advise you that it is your responsibility to have them repaired. Alternatively, Lampton Homes will do it and re-charge you accordingly.

You are responsible for:

- Fixtures and fittings, you (or anyone living with you) install that caused damage
- The cost of any repairs caused by your own misuse; neglect or accidental damage
- Minor cracks to plaster / woodwork
- Curtain rails
- Lost or broken keys
- Carpets and blinds in your home

Please note that the majority if not all defect related works will take place during normal working hours on a weekday and it is important that access is made available. Typically, the relevant contractor(s) will be in touch to organise a time that is convenient to you.



# Defect Categories

Defects fall into the following categories and will be dealt with on priority basis:

## Category 1 – Emergency

To be resolved in 24 hours.

An emergency repair is one that immediately affects your health, safety or security and would endanger life, or, if not repaired or will damage the fabric of the building. Emergency repairs will be completed within 24 hours. On this basis, appointments are not available for emergency repairs. Often the solution is to make the immediate risk safe with further routine repairs required to fully remedy the issue.

Examples of emergency repairs are:

- Dangerous structures
- Total loss of water supply
  - o Complete loss of water supply. Before calling In Hours (02081297295) and Out of hours (02081297296) customer care, please check that your water supplier has not turned off the water to carry out repair work in the area.
- Burst pipes
  - o When a leak cannot be contained and is causing damage, particularly if it's leaking into an electrical fitting, please turn off your supply via the stopcock located in your hall cupboard, before calling Lampton Homes customer care.
- Blocked drains or toilet (if there is only one toilet)
  - o When a leak cannot be contained and is causing damage, particularly if it's leaking into an electrical fitting, please turn off your supply via the stopcock located in your hall cupboard, before calling Lampton Homes customer care.
- Flooding
- No hot water
  - o Complete failure of the combined central heating / hot water system. Before calling Lampton Homes customer care, please check that this has not been caused by incorrectly setting your timers or thermostats, or by any shut off device that can be reset by the user.
- Total loss of power or lighting
  - o When there is a total loss throughout the property and it cannot be solved by resetting the master trip switch, or if the loss is partial but there is a potential safety hazard. Please check that your electricity supplier has not turned off the mains to carry out repair work and that there is no local power failure, before calling Lampton Homes customer care.
- Major faults with electricity supply
- Unsafe electrical fittings
- Breaches of security to outside doors and windows
- Blocked flue

- Gas leaks
  - o Gas leaks must be reported to the gas supply company.
- Broken windows
- Severe roof leaks
- Fire damage
- Total loss of heating (between November to March inclusive)

## Category 2 – Urgent

To be resolved in 3 working days.

Some repairs will need more than one appointment to resolve. Our contractor will arrange the next appointment date if this is required, following the first appointment.

Examples of non-emergency repairs are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Blocked drains, sinks, basins, baths and toilets                   | • Minor plumbing repairs                   |
| • Defective cistern or overflow                                      | • Plasterwork                              |
| • Heating faults or breakdowns (between April and October inclusive) | • Kitchen units and worktops               |
| • Leaking roofs  | • Repairs to doors, windows and floors     |
| • Electrical works   | • External repairs to walls, and pathways  |
| • Blocked gutters  | • Dripping or leaking taps or shower units |
| • Failure of entry phone   | • Faulty communal TV aerial                |
| • Damage to stair treads, handrails or banisters                     | • Repairs to windows and external doors    |

## Category 3 – Routine and Repairs 20 working days

Some repairs are carried out as part of a planned programme; this helps us to achieve better value for money. If the repair falls into this category, we will advise when the repair is planned for and what will happen next. Planned repairs are outside the responsive repairs priorities.

- General carpentry repairs or tiling
- Repairing / easing doors, windows and floors
- Repairs to external walls, plasterwork, brickwork and slates / tiles
- Repairs / cleaning of gutters and down pipes
- Repairs to kitchen fittings

## Category 4 – End of Defects Liability Period

Any non-urgent and cosmetic items such may be left until the end of the defects liability period.

## Items Not Classified as Defects

The following items are NOT defects and should NOT be sent to the Building Contractor to rectify.

- General wear and tear
- Accidental damage.
- Deterioration caused by neglect or failure to carry out normal maintenance
- Damage caused by resident / leaseholder.
- Damage caused by nature and severe weather conditions (gales, flood, etc)
- Blown light bulbs (if light bulbs blow more often than is reasonable then Lampton Homes will arrange an investigation).
- Spiders web on windows.
- Leaves in gutters.
- Birds' nests.
- Failure to follow instructions for use of boilers or other appliances.
- Faults on item gifted to tenants e.g. some white goods.
- Window handle will not work (press button on handle to turn and open window)
- Condensation or damp caused by improper use of ventilation – extractors fans not being used, trickle vents on windows not open etc
- Kitchen shelves in cupboards not at the correct height – adjustable by resident.
- Anything caused by alterations or extensions to a dwelling after practical completion – for example residents altering property layout.
- Minor decorative cracks to exterior or interior brickwork and mortar – all cracks will be inspected at the end of defects inspection.
- Ants or bugs of any kind in property
- Colour or variation of wood or other materials etc
- Any scratches or dents marks that were not identified at handover: e.g., on doors, bath or kitchen surfaces.
- Streetlights or other infrastructure not part of actual development project.
- Misuse of product or appliances
- Cracked or broken glass
- Vandalism
- Resident / leaseholder locked out / lost keys.
- Blocked drainage caused by misuse e.g. putting inappropriate items down toilet such as nappies, incontinence pads etc.

## Home Alterations

You cannot alter or extend your flat without the prior permission of Lampton Homes and no alteration will be approved during defect liability period.



# How Drying Out Affects Your New Home



Like most new things, a newly constructed home needs to be taken care of. In the first few months, it's especially important that your home is allowed to 'settle' – this includes allowing it to dry out gently.

During this period, you may notice minor cracks in walls, gaps in joinery and white deposits on the walls – all are completely normal in new homes and may occur regardless of the measures you take to ensure that they do not. However, you can reduce the chance of this happening by following the steps outlined in this section.

## Drying Out

Small cracks in the walls and gaps in joinery are both common signs of shrinkage. This happens when timbers and other materials contract as they dry out. It's extremely unlikely that these cracks are anything structurally significant, and they can normally be put right very easily with ordinary filler and a simple lick of paint during routine redecoration.



*Cracking due to Shrinkage/Drying Out*

**Please note that cracks are not a defect and should not be reported.**

To keep cracks and gaps to a minimum, you need to allow all the materials used in constructing your home to dry out gradually. Shrinkage is accelerated by heat, so you need to be sparing with it. Try to keep an even temperature throughout your home and, if you move in during the winter months, don't be tempted to turn the central heating up to its highest setting.

## Condensation

Condensation is caused by moist air coming into contact with cold surfaces. Condensation forms as water droplets on cold surfaces such as walls, ceilings and window frames and glazing. Condensation can be the result of evaporation of moisture released from building materials as they dry out, such as plaster and concrete. This is quite common in new homes.



*Condensation on a Window*

Condensation will gradually reduce as the building dries out, but you should avoid contributing to it in order to prevent the appearance of mould. If allowed to persist, condensation can result in the appearance of mould on interior surfaces such as walls, ceilings and windows and even on furnishings. However, there are a number of things you can do, even after the building itself has finished drying out, to protect your home against harmful levels of condensation:

- Open windows to allow trapped moisture to escape.
- If a mechanical ventilation or heat recovery (MVHR) system has been installed in your home, ensure that you familiarise yourself with the manual and manufacturer's guidance. It is important to understand how these systems operate in order to run your home effectively.

- Cover pans when cooking to reduce steam and use the extractor fan where possible.
- Always use the extractor fan when bathing or taking a shower.
- Stop moist air spreading around your home by keeping doors closed when cooking or bathing.
- 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).
- During the colder months, heat your home evenly and consistently to a lower temperature throughout the day, rather than setting the heating to come on in the mornings and evenings only. That way surfaces are not allowed to cool down enough to allow the formation of condensation from moist air inside.

Don't let condensation mould become a problem.  
Preventing it is much easier than getting rid of it!

## Efflorescence

The appearance of a white deposit on the wall (known as efflorescence) can also be an effect of the drying-out process. These white deposits are actually natural salts that come out of the wall materials and are quite normal. These salts are not harmful and usually disappear over time, and where they appear on internal walls, they can be brushed or wiped away. However, if the white deposits continue to appear on internal walls, it could indicate something more serious, such as a water leak.



*Efflorescence on Brickwork*





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