

Here to Help guide



Congratulations and welcome to your new home! We're sure you're excited to get settled in, so to help you do just that, have a read through this useful guide to help you look after your home.

Reporting a defect

Defects in a new build home are normal and some items are covered under your defect liability period which is similar to a warranty. In most cases, this is for a period of 12 months.

In the case of an emergency, please call our Customer Relationship Team on **0808 164 0111** as soon as you can. All other defects can be reported by choosing one of the three options below:

- 1.** Visit our Customer Care web page **www.karbonhomes.co.uk/customer-care-newbuild** and complete the online form
- 2.** Email our Customer Relationship Team on **info@karbonhomes.co.uk**
- 3.** Call our Customer Relationship Team on **0808 164 0111**

When appointments are made for reported defects, please make sure you're at home. Don't worry if you're at work, it's fine for a family member to attend.

What to do if you smell gas

Turn off the gas supply, locate the lever next to the gas meter and move it one quarter way around this can be either right or left, until the gas stops.

Once the supply has been switched off, open all windows and doors to let in fresh air. Extinguish any naked flames, don't light matches, smoke, or use lighters. Don't attempt to switch off or on, any electrical switches. Be safe and leave your home.

Immediately call the National Gas Networking Emergency Service, on **0800 111 999**.

Understanding the fuse board

The location of the consumer unit varies and will usually be found in a hallway, cupboard, utility room or garage.

The black switches are labelled so that you know which room has a fault. If you need to switch off the electricity to your home, you can do so by using the red switch.

Using your kitchen appliances

Kitchen appliances are provided with a 2-year manufacturer's warranty. Before using your oven for the first time we recommend heating the oven for around 45 minutes at high heat, this will help to remove the coating inside the oven and the new smell. The manufacturer manual will give instruction on this.

Washing Machine

You will need to contact a joiner to drill any holes needed in the kitchen cupboard for the washing machine pipework.

Manuals for all appliances will be included in the home user pack. You'll notice an isolation switch for any built-in appliances on the wall. The extractor should be maintained by regular cleaning, bulbs can be changed by removing the cover over them. Try to avoid getting water onto wooden surfaces such as kitchen unit doors as this can cause them to swell.

Damage caused by Water Ingress/Water

The images below show examples of water damage to the kitchen frontals and as you can see, the areas have become bubbled and blown. This is known as water damage or water ingress. We'd recommend making sure that you're wiping and carefully drying any water or liquid spillages, as soon as possible to avoid any water damage or ingress to the worktops, cupboards, and drawers.



These images are used for illustration purpose only.

Please be mindful, this type of damage wouldn't be covered under any warranty provided.

Some helpful tips to remember when cleaning are:

- Try to use soft cloths or sponges - these should be dampened with warm soapy water only.
- Don't use harsh chemicals or cleaning products such as bleach as this may affect the finish of the surfaces and could lead to potential damage such as chips to the corners or the doors and drawers.

Cleaning products can also affect and corrode any silicone sealant used, especially where there are joints in the worktop surface or around the cooker area.

By keeping kettles or appliance's that can cause steam build up, away from high level or directly underneath kitchen cupboards and any joints in worktops, this will help to prevent condensation forming, and as such, causing damage to your kitchen worktops or cupboards.

Should there be a leak, please make sure you isolate the water supply, and contact our Customer Relationship Team as soon as you can.

Giving your new home time

Your new home needs time to dry out. Minor cracking around door frames, windowsills and where the door walls meet the ceiling are perfectly normal and can easily be repaired with filler when you redecorate.

In the rare event minor cracks to walls, ceilings, or skirting boards is above the size of a £1 coin on its side, take pictures and email our Customer Relationship Team on info@karbonhomes.co.uk

The images to the right are examples of natural cracks, this is perfectly normal and can be expected as part of the drying process. Cracks/shrinkage of this size is not deemed excessive.

We recommend waiting 12 months before decorating or hanging wallpaper in your new home to help reduce any cracks whilst your home dries out.

You can still paint your walls if you wish, marks that are visible on walls, like the image to the right, can be cleaned with some warm soapy water.

Flooring

Please note anything other than laying of your own carpets will require consent from Karbon by contacting our Customer Relationship Team once your tenancy has commenced.

All floor tiles and wood flooring are classed as fixed fittings so will be declined in the first 12 months of living in your new home.

When you arrange with your carpet fitter to lay any underlay and your own carpets, you will also need to arrange for any internal doors to be rehung or planed.

Condensation

You may experience some form of condensation; this is perfectly normal and will reduce as part of the natural drying out process. Excess condensation can result in the appearance of mould, to help prevent this, keep all trickle vents open and ventilate your home as much as possible. Use the extractor fans provided in bathrooms and kitchens. Avoid drying clothing on radiators as this can also cause condensation in your home.



Keeping you safe

Your fire alarms are battery and mains operated, if the battery goes flat the alarm will start to beep and you'll need to change the battery. For your safety you should test fire alarms weekly. To do this hold the button down on the alarm for a few seconds. You will hear two beeps in a 2-storey home, and 3 beeps in a 3-storey home. Excessive dust can trigger the alarm so it's best to dust and Hoover regularly.



Your heating system

Heating systems can vary depending on the home. Full instructions for your boiler and thermostat are included in your user manuals. If you see an F1 error code displayed this usually means you'll need to re-pressurise the boiler. If you'd like this explained in more detail, just let us know.

Most radiators, other than those in bathrooms, hallways, or the rooms where the thermostat is located, will have a thermostatic radiator valve to adjust your heating.

Some homes may have more than one heating thermostat depending on their size, this gives more control over the temperature in certain parts of the home.

Loft access and storage

The loft is a ventilated space, not designed for storage or boarding, as this can affect the insulation, or even the warranty on your home if it damages the ceiling below.

Lofts can also become damp during the drying out process and are not suited for storage. If you do need to enter the loft, please only stand on roof trusses.

TV aerial location

Wiring for the TV point is coiled in the loft, approximately 1 metre from the hatch. Please contact your provider to arrange any internet connection after moving in.

Drilling carefully

Before drilling, please use a cable detector to make sure you don't hit any cables or pipes in the wall. Heavier items should be hung on the outer walls as these are stronger, stick to light items on partition walls.

Glazing

Please check your windows for excessive scratches straight away. When checking, stand in the middle of the room, and look through the glass. If excessive scratches are visible, take a photo and send it via email to info@karbonhomes.co.uk and we'll be happy to review with our contractor, you will be contacted with a further update in due course.

Windows, doors, and vents

All windows have locks, except fire escape windows. Please leave trickle vents open to help with the drying out process of your home where possible. You can keep your windows in good condition by regularly cleaning the mechanism tracks and making sure they're free from debris, as well as oiling the moving parts.

External doors can be locked by firstly closing the door and lifting the handle, you'll then be able to turn the key or thumb screw. Most door locks are fitted with a thumb screw, to allow easy escape in the event of a fire.

Guttering and downpipes

Gutters and downpipes may occasionally become clogged with debris and leaves. Cleaning the gutters regularly is an important part of your day-to-day home maintenance, please do be careful whilst working at height and always use ladders.

Your garden area

Before you move in, your garden fence panels will be pre-treated. You shouldn't need to stain these again in the first 12-18 months.

Please try to keep off any newly laid turf for up to six weeks. If the turf was laid in dry conditions, keep it well watered and maintained. You'll need to wait until the grass roots have stabilised in the soil before mowing, new turf takes at least one season to settle properly. You can cut grass too short and risk damaging it, so please be mindful when you cut your grass. All maintenance and upkeep of any grassed area is part of the day-to-day running of your home.

Waterlogging or surface water in your garden

It's normal for some parts of the garden to become waterlogged or suffer surface water during wet conditions and during the winter season. Please allow the water to fully drain away, you'll need to monitor it over several drier days. If you experience prolonged or extreme flooding, contact our Customer Relationship Team.

External taps

External/outside taps need to be isolated during the winter months; this will stop frost causing damage to the tap or pipework.

The image to the right shows a typical isolator valve. To drain the outside tap of water, run the tap and use a screwdriver to turn the isolator valve (as circled on the image) a quarter turn until the water stops. The isolator valve is usually located under the kitchen sink.



Dealing with major leaks

If you experience a major leak that you can't control, be sure to switch off your electricity supply. First, find the fuse box usually located in a hallway, cupboard, utility room or garage. Flick the large switch in the direction of off; this will isolate the supply (see image to the right).

Turn off the water supply at the stop tap, this will be found under the kitchen sink. Turn on the taps to make sure all the water has drained; this is to empty the pipes. The image below shows a typical stop tap. Turn it clockwise.



To isolate leaks coming from appliances such as washing machines, first find the isolator which is a plastic handle usually blue in colour and located under the sink (as circled on the image above). Carefully turn the handle until the water is off.

To isolate water from toilets and taps, first find the toilet or tap's isolator valve, usually located behind the toilet, or tap (pictured above next to external taps section). Run the tap and use a screwdriver to turn the isolator valve a quarter turn until the water stops.



If your toilet cistern begins to drip, find the isolator valve at the back of the toilet and close the valve fully. Then flush the toilet which should empty the cistern and prevent the leak causing further damage.

A dripping radiator valve can often be temporarily stopped by closing the valve on the radiators.

Sealant

Sometimes water can get past the seals around the edges of baths and showers.

If the leak is around a fixed sealant known as mastic/silicone, (the edge of a bath or shower) the seal may have deteriorated. Keeping seals in a good condition is part of your normal day-to-day maintenance, applying fresh sealant will rectify the problem. When possible, dry tiles with a towel after a bath or shower to prevent mildew build up or mould.

Waste pipe leaking

First find the source of the leak. If the water is escaping from a joint in the waste pipe that you can access yourself, try to tighten the joint. You'll be able to do this by holding the collar of the joint in one hand and the section of pipe it's screwed onto in the other, then rotate the collar clockwise until it feels tight.

If the leak seems to be coming from an area you can't get to, such as under the floor, then please contact our Customer Relationship Team to organise an appointment.

Looking after your toilet

You'll see your toilet is dual flush, the large button gives a 6-litre flush, the smaller one, 3 litres. Please avoid flushing wipes as these can cause blockages to yours and your neighbours drains.

Please try to avoid the use of blue loo products, these can cause seals to erode and cause leaks.

Bathroom care

Don't forget to clean the hair trap or drain on showers and baths regularly, to avoid blockages. We recommend using warm soapy water to clean tiles and grout.

Try and use the extractor when running the bath or shower, the isolation switch for this can usually be found above the bathroom door.

Due to the design of many extractor fans, you may experience some low noise when the unit is in use, this is perfectly normal and nothing to be concerned over.

Baths are fitted with an anti-scald valve, located under the bath. This sets the maximum temperature to 48 degrees to comply with building regulations. When cleaning the bath, avoid bleach, this can take the surface off the bath and discolour shower trays.

Drives and pathways

Gravel, stones, and other loose surfaces may become displaced over time, and you may need to add or replace these stones in the future. Some settlement to landscaping may naturally occur over time, this would be managed under your day-to-day maintenance of your home.

Please try not to cover drains with soil, turf, or paving, and make sure they are always kept clear and free for debris. Drain covers will need to be removed to investigate any blockages.

Parking

It's important to remember not to block or park on your neighbour's driveways. Any visitor parking bays are for public use.

Utility bill

If you have not received any utility bills after 3-months, please contact your provider. You'll find your council tax band by contacting your local authority or looking online.

The essentials

Now you know how to look after key elements of your home and what to do if a problem occurs, if anything is unclear, please call our Customer Relationship Team and we'll be happy to explain anything.

Here's a quick checklist of things mentioned that you may like to do when you get settled.

- ✓ Test the smoke detectors work.
- ✓ Check outside lights.
- ✓ Read the user manuals and operating guides.
- ✓ Test your water is running both hot and cold.
- ✓ Test your heating system, check the pressure too.
- ✓ Arrange your internet/telephone supply.
- ✓ Register the boiler with the manufacturer to activate the warranty.
- ✓ Test that all your keys work and your doors lock.
- ✓ Notify utility providers of change of address.
- ✓ Register any appliances by calling the manufacturer to activate the warranty.

The right service

Our aim is to give you the service you expect all day, every day. So, we greatly appreciate your time and view any feedback as an opportunity to improve our services.

We'll be sending you a Customer Satisfaction Survey for you to let us know what you think of our service. We'd love to know what went well and what could be improved so we can adapt or put things right.

Thank you for choosing Karbon Homes, we hope you'll be very happy in your new home and create some wonderful memories.

