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Welcome Home

Congratulations on choosing Qualis Homes. We know that buying a home is always a big step, so we're here to make the process as simple and stress-free as possible.

At Qualis Homes, we pride ourselves on not only creating places you are proud to call home, but also delivering professional customer service.

As a truly local property company, we are committed to the district of Epping Forest, its continued prosperity and those who live here.

It is our privilege to provide you with help and guidance from selecting your plot, all the way along your Customer Journey.

OK, we are now ready to take our first steps together...



Customer Charter

At Qualis Homes, we're committed to ensuring all customers receive a personal, quality service.

Both our Customer Charter and Customer Journey are designed to deliver the best possible experience for you, our customer, from your very first contact with us, all the way through to living in your new home.





We comply with the principles set by the Consumer Code for New Homes.

-  Provide friendly and professional advice when helping you choose your new home. Giving you the detailed information and options you need to make an informed decision.
-  Ensure our staff are well trained, with the knowledge to help guide you through your Customer Journey.
-  Strive to ensure that our advertising and marketing material is clear and truthful.
-  Provide Health and Safety guidance before visiting, or moving into, sites with ongoing construction.
-  Communicate with you in a clear and consistent manner throughout your journey, so you know what to expect, and when.
-  Provide you with a Qualis Homes Customer Manual, which is full of essential information to help guide you along your Customer Journey.
-  Invite your suitably qualified representative to a Pre-Completion Inspection, if requested.
-  Take you through your home demonstration shortly before you move in. This is where we show you all the features of your new home and how they work.
-  Explain the Qualis Homes 2-year warranty, including 24-hour emergency assistance cover, and the Build-Zone 10-year warranty.
-  Provide information about our aftersales service, including how to contact us and the service we offer for routine issues and any emergencies that may arise.
-  Ensure our contractual terms and conditions are clear and fair, including information about refund and cancellation policies.
-  Listen to your customer feedback and value all suggestions.
-  Tell you about our policy for managing potential complaints, which we aim to resolve as quickly as possible.
-  Always treat you with the respect you deserve and ask that you show our colleagues and partners the same courtesy.



Consumer Code

We strive to ensure that when you purchase a new home with us, that the process is as clear and transparent as possible.

-  The Consumer Code for New Homes is in place to help us deliver this commitment to you and to protect your interests throughout your Customer Journey.
-  A copy of the Code has been provided within this manual and can also be found on their website <https://www.consumercodefornewhomes.com>, along with further information. We recommend you familiarise yourself with the contents of this document and the support that is available to you for the first 2 years from your completion date.
-  The Code set outs what you can expect from us at each stage of your purchase including service levels, buyer information, aftersales and resolution services. We want you to be fully informed about your buying process, the home you are buying, including the development it is part of, and what help is available to you, including your consumer rights.
-  There are certain situations when the Consumer Code may not apply, please refer to the documentation for further details.

Your Qualis Homes Customer Journey

We are here to help guide you along the way. From reservation to aftersales, and everything in between, follow our step-by-step path to making your move!

Keeping in touch

Throughout your Customer Journey, your Sales Advisor will be in regular contact, providing updates and information. Don't forget, if you have any questions, we're just a phone call away.



Step 1 Reservation Process

Once we have checked your ID verification, we'll take you through your Reservation Checklist, which covers everything you need to know about your new home. This is followed by the Reservation Agreement, which provides further details about your purchase including the terms of sale. After this, you will be asked to pay your reservation fee.



Step 2 Contract Exchange

Following the Reservation Process, we'll issue a contract to your solicitor with a target exchange date. They will then do their due diligence before sending you the contract for signing and also request the deposit ready for exchange. If you are buying with a mortgage, you will need to get this in place.



Step 3 Home Quality Check

Once your new home is ready, the warranty provider will conduct their final inspection. The build team then adds the finishing touches before we carry out our Qualis Quality Qualification (QQQ). Once completed, we will serve notice to your solicitor. At this point, you can discuss move-in dates.



Step 4 Home Demonstration

This gives you the opportunity to look around your finished new home, from top to bottom, and familiarise yourself with all its features and fittings. If requested, you will also be given the option to appoint a suitably qualified representative to carry out a Pre-Completion Inspection.



Step 5 Home Move In

Once your solicitor has put legal completion in motion and monies have been received, we'll contact you to let you know you're the proud owner of your new Qualis home. Your Sales Advisor will meet you at your home to congratulate you and hand over the keys.



Step 6 Aftersales Service

Following your completion, we'll stay in contact to see how you're settling in and getting used to your new home. You also have the reassurance of our 2-year Qualis Homes warranty, along with the 10-year Build-Zone warranty. So, if you need any help or support, our team are on hand.



Step

01 Reservation Process

The first step on your exciting journey.

Once we have checked your ID verification, your Sales Advisor will take you through your Reservation Checklist, which covers everything you need to know about your new home and its surroundings.

We want you to have as much information as possible about the home you are purchasing, particularly if you are buying a home which is not yet built, known as buying off-plan.

Your Reservation Checklist is designed to ensure you understand all the important details including the specification, plans, tenure, parking arrangements and predicted current and future costs associated with the upkeep and maintenance of the property.

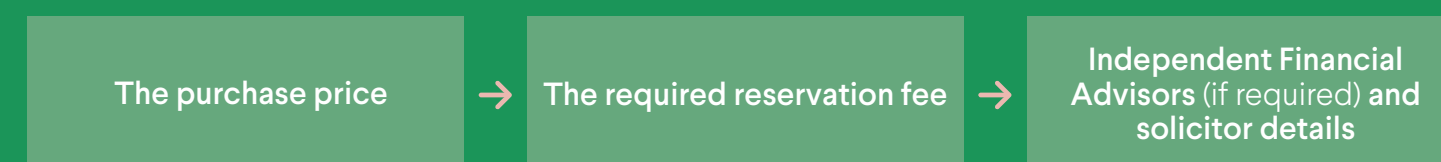


We'll also cover the essential stages of the Qualis Homes Customer Journey, clarifying what each step means for you, including information about your warranties.

The Reservation Checklist plays a crucial role in adhering to industry standards as set out in the Consumer Code for New Homes. For your convenience, we have placed a copy of this document in **this manual**.

The Reservation Agreement

You'll then be taken through your Reservation Agreement, which includes the financial details of your purchase:



We'll estimate a time frame for the completion of your home; this will depend on the current build stage, but we typically work to a 3-month window.



Once all the paperwork is complete, you'll pay your reservation fee.



We'll give you your Qualis Homes Customer Manual.



Your home will be taken off the market once all the paperwork has been signed and we have received your reservation fee.



Your Sales Advisor will talk you through the rest of the process, including moving into your new home and our aftersales service.

Step

02 Contract Exchange

Your journey to owning your dream home is underway.

Once all the reservation paperwork is complete, our legal representatives will draft the sales contract, ready to send to your solicitor for review. We aim to have this ready within one week from the reservation date.

During this period, we kindly ask that you ensure your solicitor is fully instructed and, if you are arranging funding, that your mortgage application is underway.



The sales contract outlines the anticipated time frame for exchange of contracts – typically within 4-6 weeks.



Once your solicitor has completed their due diligence, they will send you their report and a copy of the contract for you to sign. If there is anything in the contract you would like clarifying or any spoken statements you wish to include, you should speak with your solicitor.



You will provide deposit funds of 10% of the purchase price (excluding the reservation fee).



With your agreement, contracts are exchanged.



Your deposit is transferred to us where it is held securely until completion.



Your Sales Advisor will be in touch to let you know contracts have been successfully exchanged.



We'll be in regular contact, keeping you updated throughout the entire journey.



Step

03 Home Quality Check

Committed to delivering places you are proud to call home.

When your new home is structurally complete, our warranty provider, Build-Zone, steps in to perform their final inspection, ensuring that your home meets all necessary building standards and regulations.



The build team then add their finishing touches.



We conduct a thorough quality assurance process, that we like to refer to as the Qualis Quality Qualification (QQQ).



Following a successful QQQ, our legal representatives serve a 10 working day completion notice to your solicitor.



Discuss legal completion and move-in dates with your solicitor and Sales Advisor.



Your Sales Advisor will arrange a date for your Home Demonstration, usually the week before completion.



Give you the option to appoint a suitably qualified representative to carry out a Pre-Completion Inspection, should you wish to do so.



Step

04 Home Demonstration

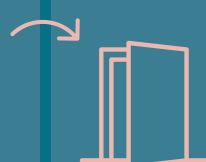
We're here to make sure you feel right at home, from the very start.

During the Home Demonstration, you get the chance to thoroughly discover your new home, inside and out.

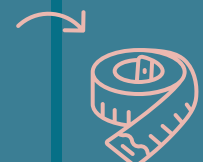
Our team will guide you through everything – from the nooks and crannies to the fixtures, fittings and appliances. We will make sure you're fully acquainted with all aspects of your home.



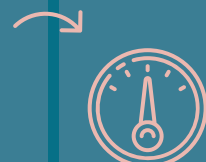
Home Demonstration appointment scheduled within working hours, at a convenient time for you.



Complete tour of your new home.



Measure up for fixtures and fittings.



Find out how your appliances work.

If any concerns arise during the appointment, we will make a note and let you know what steps we'll take to address them. While we will always endeavour to resolve these prior to your move-in, there may be occasions where this is not possible. If this is the case, we will provide you with a time frame.

You'll also receive guidance about what happens next, leading up to your move-in day and our aftersales service. We want to ensure you're fully prepared and ready for this exciting new chapter. Feel free to ask our team any questions you might have – we're here to make your transition as smooth and comfortable as we can.



Step

05 Home Move In

Becoming the proud owner of your new Qualis home.

We understand there is a lot to think about ahead of your big move, so we have put together a handy list of things to remember.



Move-in day

Things to remember on the day!



Phone numbers
Solicitors, removal company, Sales Advisor



Important items
Cash, bank cards, driving licence



Snacks and drinks



Favourite toys/ books for children



Everyday essentials

Be prepared...



Get packing
It's time to grab your boxes and get packing!



Removals
Whether it's a man with a van or a specialist, it's a good idea to book this early.



Insurance
Consider transit insurance, and swap your home and contents policy to your new address.



Transfer your bills
Record meter readings on the day you leave.



Broadband
Set up broadband and new TV services.



Update addresses
Tell banks, subscriptions, employers, DVLA. Register with new health practitioners (Doctors/Dentist).



Get the keys
Your Sales Advisor will meet you at your home to hand over the keys.



Questions
Please do ask any questions you may have.



Meter readings
We'll take your meter readings for you and pass them on to the relevant utility providers.

Once your solicitor sets legal completion in motion and monies have been received by us, your Sales Advisor will contact you to let you know that legal completion has taken place – and you're officially the owner of your new home!

Step

06 Aftersales Service

At Qualis Homes, we place a special emphasis on your experience throughout your Customer Journey.

We have a dedicated and knowledgeable aftersales team on hand to offer support and to ensure you feel confident as you settle into your new home. From the moment we hand you your keys, and throughout the duration of your 2-year Qualis warranty, our aftersales team is only a phone call away.

We are passionate about customer service and want to make moving into and living in your new Qualis home as straightforward and enjoyable as possible. We strive to build places and communities that our customers are proud to call home. Every home we build undergoes strict quality assurance checks, so you can move with peace of mind knowing your new home is ready for you.

Settling in...



Shortly after your completion, a member of our team will call you to see how you are settling into your new home. This first conversation is to ensure everything is meeting your expectations and to lend a hand with any questions you may have.



If there are any specific points you'd like to discuss or bring to our attention, we encourage you to do so during this call. We will need to know the exact nature of any items so we can accurately log them into our system.



If we are unable to assist straight away, we will record all the details and pass them on to the appropriate team for resolution. If we are unable to diagnose over the phone, we will arrange to visit you to investigate. Please refer to the *Customer Support* section for further information.



Please note that all cosmetic defects must be reported within 48 hours of legal completion. Any unreported issues may not be covered.

Living in your new home...

We understand that queries often arise once you've started living in your brand-new home. That's why our aftersales service team are on hand to help.

Thanks to our meticulous quality checks, the instances of post-completion issues are kept to a minimum. Any that do arise can be discussed during your courtesy visits or at any point within your 2-year warranty period, as outlined in the *Customer Support* section.

Any issue or concern you report will be documented in your personal plot file, guaranteeing we have a record for future reference. This can be shared with relevant members of our team as needed.

We recommend that all our customers take a moment to familiarise themselves with the details of our 2-year Qualis warranty. For a better understanding of what's covered and what's not, as well as your responsibilities as a homeowner, please refer to the *Your Warranty* section.

Getting comfortable...

Just a few weeks after your completion, we'll arrange a follow-up courtesy appointment. We aim to conduct these during working hours; however, we want to make this meeting as convenient as possible for you. If you're unable to receive a call during working hours, then we will do our utmost to facilitate a call during an evening or a weekend. You can choose whether you'd like to chat in person at your home, connect online, or have a telephone conversation. Please keep in mind that these courtesy visits can take up to an hour, depending on what you'd like to discuss.

During the appointment, we will, if applicable, go over any items you've previously mentioned, making sure these have been resolved to your satisfaction, or confirming the time frame for any outstanding work. We'll also discuss any additional matters or questions you may have

and, where required, agree on a remediation plan during the meeting or within an agreed time frame.

If we're unable to provide a solution during the meeting, we'll arrange a follow-up visit to investigate. For more information on this process, please check the *Customer Support* section. We'll make notes about everything we discuss on a Courtesy Visit Form, ensuring we have an accurate record for future reference.

After this second courtesy appointment, you'll receive a survey that lets you share your thoughts on the service you've received from the point of sale through to your aftersales journey. Taking a moment to complete and return this form means a lot to us, as your feedback guides our ongoing efforts to enhance and refine our service.

We want all our customers to be confident that should any issues arise, our aim is to always find solutions as quickly as possible.

Your Warranty

Moving into your new home is always exciting; our aim is to make it as seamless as possible. With your warranties in place, you can settle into your new home with confidence.

Qualis Homes warranty



Provides coverage for two years from your legal completion date.



Covers against physical damage or defects stemming from faulty materials or workmanship. Exclusions apply.

Build-Zone warranty



Independent provider, safeguards you during the third to tenth years.



Offers protection against physical damage arising from structural defects.



To find out more please refer to the Build-Zone Homebuyer's Guide included or visit their website <https://www.build-zone.com>. Exclusions and excess apply.

Appliances and other items



The appliances in your home, not just those found in your kitchen, come with their own individual manufacturer's warranty. It's essential that you register these warranties directly with each manufacturer.

Other items may also benefit from their own warranties. It is important you register each of these to ensure you are covered.

Your home cover will not be affected if you decide to sell or let your home within the warranty period. If you sell, your warranty will pass on to the new owners. In this instance, please make them aware of what is covered and how they should contact us to provide their details.



Understanding what's covered by the warranty, and what isn't, is crucial. To make things clear, we've provided some examples of what would not be included.

Understanding your cover

Certain situations will not be covered by your warranty. To help, we have provided some examples below.

Cosmetic defects

Visible marks or scuffs, dents, chips or scratches, not reported **within 48 hours** of legal completion. Aspects like decoration, kitchen units, appliances, sinks, worktops, sanitaryware, brassware, tiling, flooring, radiators, glass, window frames, doors, woodwork – essentially anything susceptible to pre-move-in damage.

Misuse

Any damage due to neglect or misuse, including accidental and improper property maintenance.

Other warranties or insurances

This includes items covered by separate manufacturers' warranties, like appliances, or those which are covered by household insurance.

Unmaintained fixtures and fittings

Any fixtures and fittings, including appliances and other equipment, not serviced and maintained as per the manufacturers' instructions, by an appropriately trained professional.

Fire/smoke damage

Damage resulting from fire or smoke.

Seasonal/weather damage

Issues or damage caused by seasonal changes or weather conditions; high winds, storms, heat, cold, snow, floods, etc.

General wear and tear

Damage caused through the natural use of items, such as door handles and hinges.

Standing water

Damage from water located more than 3 metres from your home.

Electrical

Damage not reported within **48 hours** of legal completion and any replacement light bulbs and fuses.

Pest control

Any pest infestations that arise.

Leaving your home unoccupied

If you plan to have an extended holiday or leave your home unoccupied for a long period.

Compensation

When arranging remedial works, we take reasonable measures to minimise any disruption. We do not pay compensation for any inconvenience, loss or discomfort caused by such works.

Please note that all cosmetic defects must be reported within 48 hours of legal completion. Any unreported issues may not be covered. If you're uncertain, feel free to ask a member of the Qualis Homes' team.

Keep in mind:

Alterations/extensions may impact your warranty.

Contact us before making any changes.

Any works you undertake to your home, or the introduction of any new equipment, appliances or materials, will not be covered and could also affect your warranty.

Some settling time is normal for your new home. Natural shrinkage and condensation aren't covered under your warranty.

We cannot protect you against every eventuality that may occur in your home. You are asked and obliged to carry out maintenance on your home to keep it in good condition. Details of things you can do to help with this can be found in the *Looking After Your New Home* section of this manual.

Limitations and conditions apply, your warranty does not affect your statutory rights.



Customer Support


At Qualis Homes, we strive to provide all our customers with the support that they need at each stage of their Customer Journey.


That is why we have a dedicated aftersales team who are on hand to offer advice and assistance once you move into your new home, and for the duration of your 2-year Qualis warranty.

You can easily report any issues or concerns to our aftersales team by phone or email.

For emergencies only, we offer an out-of-hours service. You can use the same telephone number for this. To find out about what is considered an emergency please refer to page 32 of this manual.

If you have any photos or documentation that you think may be helpful for us to assist you more effectively, please make them available. Similarly, if you have any expectations or insight into the resolution, then please let us know. Each customer has a personal plot file, and to maintain clear records, we log all your interactions in this file.

 **0333 230 0462**

 **aftersales@qualishomes.co.uk**

Regular working hours are from
Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.



For problems with appliances

As explained in the *Your Warranty* section, your appliances are covered by individual manufacturers' warranties. If you encounter any issues with your appliances, please reach out directly to the manufacturer. They'll typically assess the problem and arrange any necessary repairs or replacements, as per the warranty terms.



For non-emergency concerns

Any items or concerns you report to us will be acknowledged upon receipt. Our goal is to provide a further response within 5 working days.

We strive to investigate all queries promptly, keeping you informed throughout the process. This includes discussing realistic timelines with you, as certain matters may require longer to resolve. If, for any reason, the time frame initially provided needs adjustment, we'll communicate with you to establish new dates.

If we need to visit your home, please ensure:



Your pets are kept away from the work area.



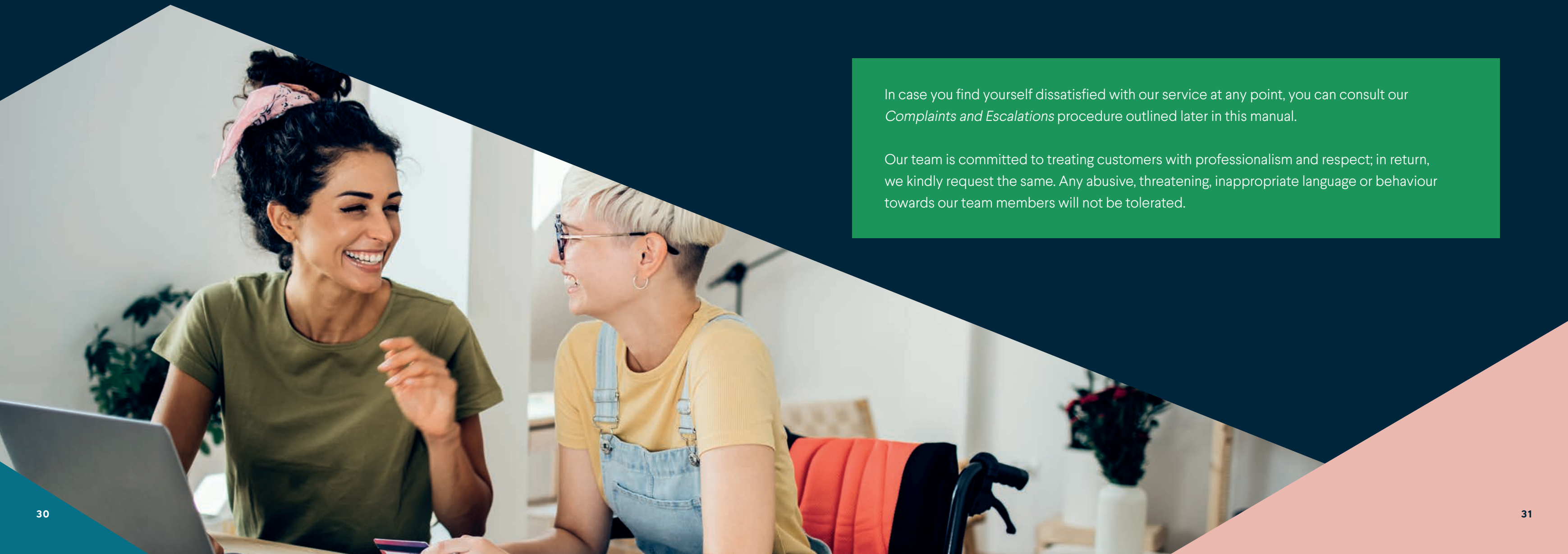
Personal items are cleared from the work area to prevent any potential damage. Please note that we cannot be held liable for any remaining items.



If assistance is needed with moving heavy objects, our team or contractors might politely decline due to their own personal health or safety concerns. We are not insured for item removal or relocation.



If you have children under 16, please ensure they're not unattended during appointments. Our team or contractors reserve the right to decline entry in such cases.



In case you find yourself dissatisfied with our service at any point, you can consult our *Complaints and Escalations* procedure outlined later in this manual.

Our team is committed to treating customers with professionalism and respect; in return, we kindly request the same. Any abusive, threatening, inappropriate language or behaviour towards our team members will not be tolerated.

What is an Emergency?

We hope your new home experience remains smooth, without any emergencies. However, if an unexpected situation arises, it's essential to be prepared and know what steps to take.

We're here to assist you with various emergencies, including:

Complete loss of power

If you find yourself with no power, please check your mains trip switch. If it has tripped please refer to page 38 for further guidance. If it does not need resetting and you still have no power, we recommend contacting your provider to check if they have turned off the power or if there is a local issue.

In an **electrical emergency** or power outage, please call **105** to be connected to your local network operator.

Loss of heating or hot water

If you find yourself with a complete failure of the heating and/or hot water system, please first check the electrical supply to each component, including the fuse to sockets or spurs. You should also check each of your thermostats and timers.

Water leaks or uncontrollable flooding that cannot be contained

Before anything else, to limit damage, isolate the water supply in your property by locating the main stopcock and turning it to the closed position.

Blocked drains

If you have a blockage that is causing the toilets to back up, flooding internally or externally, in a location which risks entering the home. To limit damage, avoid flushing or any activity that adds water to the system.

Security concerns

If there are any faults to low level windows, external doors or door locks leaving your property unsecure, or where the door is the only entrance/exit point.



If you're dealing with an emergency, reach out to our aftersales team on: **0333 230 0462**

Outside our normal working hours, this line will be managed by the out-of-hours team.

Issues with smoke alarms and other similar safety devices

Please check if the batteries are causing the problem.

Significant structural movement

Any obvious movement which could have structural impact. Please note, your warranty does not cover storm damage.

Gas safety concerns

If you smell gas, suspect a gas or carbon monoxide leak, or have any concerns about gas safety, please call the **Emergency Gas Service hotline** immediately on **0800 111 999**.

Total loss of water

We recommend contacting your water provider to check if they have turned off the supply or if there is a local issue.

Any potential health and safety risk to visitors or residents at the property or the development

Whatever the issue, if in any doubt regarding any threat to the health and safety of any individual, please contact the emergency services or us immediately.

If you find yourself needing assistance that isn't an emergency, please refer to the *Customer Support* section. Your well-being and comfort are our top priority, and we're here to help you when you need us.



Looking After Your New Home

When moving into any home, there is always lots to learn about how best to look after and maintain it. That's why we have put together these handy pointers to provide you with some useful tips and advice about how to 'run-in' and live in your new Qualis home, together with some more general information.

Depending on the type of home you live in, some of the areas covered may not be needed. For example, you may not have a driveway or garden, so just select what's helpful for you.

Your health and safety are always our priority. Certain types of maintenance or repair may require specialist knowledge and training. In such instances, these works should always be carried out by a competent, accredited trade professional. For other items, which you may feel equipped and able to carry out, always be sure to wear appropriate safety clothing for the job in hand.

In all instances, including where maintenance to fixed or freestanding appliances and equipment is deemed necessary, the manufacturer's maintenance and repair instructions take precedence over this document.



Please note, damage, negligence, improper use or failure to maintain any aspect of your new home, may affect your warranty.



Running in your new home

During the first few months your new home will need time to settle in.

This includes allowing the materials in your home to dry out naturally from the moisture absorbed during construction.

This period can vary in time depending on the type of construction, weather conditions during the build and also the season when you move in, but it usually takes between 6 months and 2 years.

Routine home maintenance

Some elements of your new home will require routine maintenance which is not included as part of your aftersales service. These could include items such as servicing of a central heating system, protecting garden fencing and painting external timbers. Whatever routine tasks need to be addressed, ensure that you are suitably competent to carry them out, or use qualified tradespeople.

Your new home is covered by our Qualis 2-year warranty so, if at any time you have any queries about routine maintenance, then please refer to our aftersales team who will be pleased to help.

Remember, we have specific instructions just for emergencies, so in the unlikely event one should arise please refer to the *What is an Emergency?* section on page 32 of this manual.

Settling cracks

Settling cracks are normal and occur in all new properties, some more visibly than others. As you live in and heat your new home, the construction materials slowly dry, which can cause them to contract. Small cracks are common, particularly in areas such as skirting and door/window frames, where two materials meet.

Normal settling cracks are nothing to worry about and are considered part of your home maintenance. They can be repaired easily with a filler/caulking compound followed by a coat of paint primer and a finish coat. **However, if you have any concerns, please contact our aftersales team.**

Efflorescence

Efflorescence deposits are common during the drying-out process. These white powdery deposits normally occur on external walls but can also be found internally.









They appear when salts within building materials come to the surface as moisture is released. These salts are not harmful and in time will usually disappear with normal weathering.



Condensation

As your home dries out, the additional moisture in the air may cause condensation to form on cold surfaces, such as windows and exterior walls.


By following our simple recommendations, you can help your home to dry out gradually and naturally:


-  Keep your home well ventilated.
-  If possible, dry washing outside.
-  If possible and safe to do so, leave windows and trickle vents (if applicable) open.
-  Try to keep the bathroom door closed during and after use.
-  Any mechanical ventilation systems should be kept on at all times and maintained in line with manufacturers' instructions.
-  Dry off any condensation that forms immediately.
-  When cooking, always use the extractor hood provided and if possible close the internal kitchen door.
-  During winter months, consider how you use your heating. Gradually warm up the structure to maintain a stable temperature and avoid overheating, which can accelerate shrinkage.

Electricity, gas, water, drainage and communication services

The maintenance of services provided to your home is generally the responsibility of the supply company up to:

 **Electricity –**
your consumer unit

 **Gas –**
your meter

 **Water, drainage and communications –**
the curtilage of your property



Maintenance of these services should only be carried out by competent and accredited persons.

It is important to familiarise yourself with the location of the mains electricity isolation switch, gas shut off valve (if applicable), water stopcock and any access chambers to ensure they are easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

Each electrical circuit is protected by a circuit breaker. In the event of a circuit breaker tripping, never attempt to override it before investigating.

Caution should always be taken when dealing with electricity. Always seek advice from a qualified tradesperson and ensure any works are carried out by a suitably trained, accredited professional.





Alarms

It's recommended that all smoke, heat and carbon monoxide alarms are tested regularly, on a weekly basis, to ensure they are working correctly. Batteries should also be changed routinely, even when mains-operated. An expiry date may be shown on the device to let you know when it needs replacing. If not, please refer to the manufacturer's guidelines. Clean regularly, following the manufacturer's instructions, to remove any accumulation of dust or debris which can prevent effective operation.

Fire extinguisher

It's advisable to have a general-purpose fire extinguisher available for use in the home. Keep in an easily accessible location, such as the kitchen. If not displayed, check the manufacturers' recommendations for servicing and the expiry date.

First-aid kit

It's also advisable to keep a first-aid kit and a book on first-aid procedures in an accessible location. Some contents will be subject to expiry dates.

Heating and hot water

There is limited maintenance that the new homeowner can carry out on their heating and hot water system. It's important to ensure regular maintenance and servicing of all the component parts by a competent, registered tradesperson, which will be a condition of your warranty.

Following the manufacturer's user manuals should ensure trouble-free operation and running.

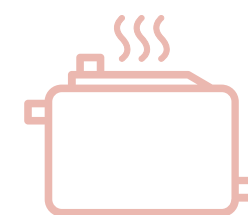
Keeping temperature controls on a reduced setting can help to reduce running costs and, with experience, the ideal operating temperature can be established.

Thermostat

In homes with a central heating system, the thermostat allows you to maintain a comfortable temperature throughout. Room temperatures may be further regulated by adjusting the individual thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs), if present.

Heating bills can be significantly reduced by lowering the thermostat by just 1 or 2 degrees.

Radiators

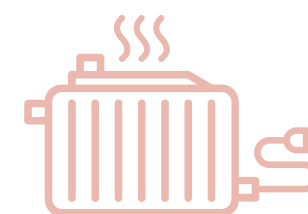


Wet radiator

To help maintain efficiency, regular dusting is recommended. If a section of the radiator feels cold, it's probably due to an airlock within the radiator. First, turn off the heating and ensure you allow enough time for the radiators to cool completely. When on, radiators contain hot water and air, which could cause scalding when released. Using a radiator bleed key, slowly open the bleed screw to allow trapped air to escape. When water starts to seep out re-tighten the screw, it's a good idea to have a cloth at hand to capture any excess water. To ensure your system is ready for the winter months and performing efficiently, during the autumn you may wish to bleed the radiators throughout your home.

If you notice a leak from one of your radiators, you should isolate it by closing both valves and opening the bleed valve to release the internal pressure; this should hopefully slow down the leak.

If your home is still within the 2-year warranty period, you can contact the Qualis Homes aftersales team for advice and, if required, to arrange for repairs. If outside of the warranty period, and you are unable to resolve, you can seek assistance from a qualified tradesperson.



Electrical radiator

Apart from regular light dusting, most electrical radiators don't require any annual servicing.

If a radiator feels cold to touch, first check its thermostatic settings. If these are correct, it may be an electrical issue, such as a blown fuse.

To maximise the performance of your radiators, when positioning furniture, try to leave space around them to allow the heat to circulate and always avoid covering.

Air-source heat pump

Air-source heat pumps are relatively low-maintenance appliances. It's important they are kept clean and that the airflow around them is not restricted. In some cases, the pump may be located within an enclosure which will be provided appropriate to its size.

Follow the manufacturer's user manual to ensure efficient operation. We recommend you familiarise yourself with the servicing requirements, as these can vary, and always use a competent registered engineer; failure to do so will affect your warranty.

**Unvented hot water system**

As this system uses a pressurised metal cylinder, you should never attempt to complete any works to it yourself. Follow the manufacturer's user manual to ensure efficient operation and for servicing advice. A routine service by a competent registered engineer is required and will be a condition of your warranty.

**Mechanical ventilation and heat recovery system**

Your MVHR system is designed to run continuously. This will ensure your home remains well ventilated, reducing condensation and nasty smells, and helping to maintain good air quality. The system is constantly passing air through its filters and valves. Over time these can become clogged, which reduces efficiency and performance of the system. Follow the manufacturer's guidance for how to clean grilles and air valves. Depending on the usage, the filters will also need to be cleaned or replaced.

A routine service, in line with manufacturers' recommendations, should be carried out by a suitably qualified engineer; failure to do so may affect your warranty.

Loft space

Be particularly careful when entering the loft space, walk only on the roof trusses. The ceiling of the room below is not designed to support additional weight.

Ensure all vents are kept clear of insulation materials or anything that may restrict airflow.

Storing belongings in the loft space is not recommended. Together with possible ventilation issues, this could cause structural damage.





Kitchen appliances/white goods

- ✓ All appliances should be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- ✓ Cleaning regularly, with suitable products, will help to keep your appliances working efficiently and looking as new.
- ✓ For dishwashers, ensure rinse aid and salt reservoirs are regularly topped up. As instructed by the manufacturer, routinely run a cleaning cycle using a specialist solution to increase the dishwasher performance and extend its service life.
- ✓ Fridges and freezers should be cleaned regularly and as required, defrosted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Particular attention should be paid to door seals and to ensure fridge drain holes are kept free from debris. This will aid efficient operation and help to reduce running costs.

- ✓ Microwave ovens should be cleaned after each use using a sponge and mild detergent or appropriate surface cleaner.
- ✓ Washing machines and washer dryers should have filters cleaned and checked regularly. Use a limescale remover routinely and leave the door slightly open after use to allow the machine to dry out. As instructed by the manufacturer, routinely run the machine on a cleaning cycle using a specialist cleaner.
- ✓ Ovens, hobs and cooker hoods should be cleaned on a regular basis using appropriate cleaning products.
- ✓ Specialist cleaning solutions are available for glass stovetops. Never use abrasive products, as these may damage the surface.

If your home is fitted with an induction hob, always use compatible pans. Pacemakers can be affected by the electromagnetic field produced by these hobs. Before use, please check and follow the precautions advised.



Kitchens



Your kitchen worktops should be used and cleaned in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. Failure to do so may result in damage or discolouration to the surface that will not be covered by your warranty.



In hard-water areas, a build-up of limescale may occur on taps and fittings. This should be removed using a proprietary cleaner. Never use abrasive products, as these may cause damage. If required, specialist solutions are available but always test on a small, inconspicuous area first, before use.



Wipe down cupboard doors using a proprietary cleaner or with warm soapy water.



When using any specialist cleaning products, you should always wear appropriate safety clothing.



If cupboard door hinges, catches or drawer runners become stiff to operate, a small amount of silicone lubricant will improve their operation. Always use a cloth to wipe away any excess. If needed, door hinges can be adjusted and tightened using a small screwdriver.



Bathrooms and toilet areas

For general maintenance of sanitaryware, brassware, tiling and grout, always use a cleaning product suitable for the surface and a non-abrasive sponge/microfibre cloth. To achieve the best finish and avoid water marks, dry the surface after cleaning and after general use.

If you live in an area with hard water, you may find that your fittings are affected by limescale which can be difficult to remove, particularly around taps and on shower screens. Never use abrasive solutions or cloths in an attempt to remove, as this may cause damage. Specialist solutions are available, but always test on a small, inconspicuous area before use.

Condensation within the bathroom and toilet areas can cause mould to form. To help prevent this, ensure rooms are adequately ventilated and the extractor system fitted is on and the airflow unrestricted.

Remove any mildew stains immediately using an appropriate removal agent, always following the usage and safety guidelines provided.

To help maintain your tiling and grout, it is recommended that you wipe down the area after use to remove the excess moisture.

Pay attention to the joints around shower trays and baths. Cracks or other damage could result in leaks or mould. Reapply an appropriate sealant as soon as possible when required.

Drains

Blocked drains and toilets are a common issue. You are responsible for the pipes and drains within your demise.

To avoid blockages do not put anything down sinks or toilets that could cause an obstruction including:

- ✗ Grease, fat and oil
- ✗ Food waste
- ✗ Baby/wet wipes – including those that are ‘flushable’
- ✗ Nappies/sanitary items
- ✗ Hair
- ✗ Any foreign objects

Please note your warranty covers system defects only. If the cause of a drainage issue is due to improper use or inappropriate waste removal, you may be charged.

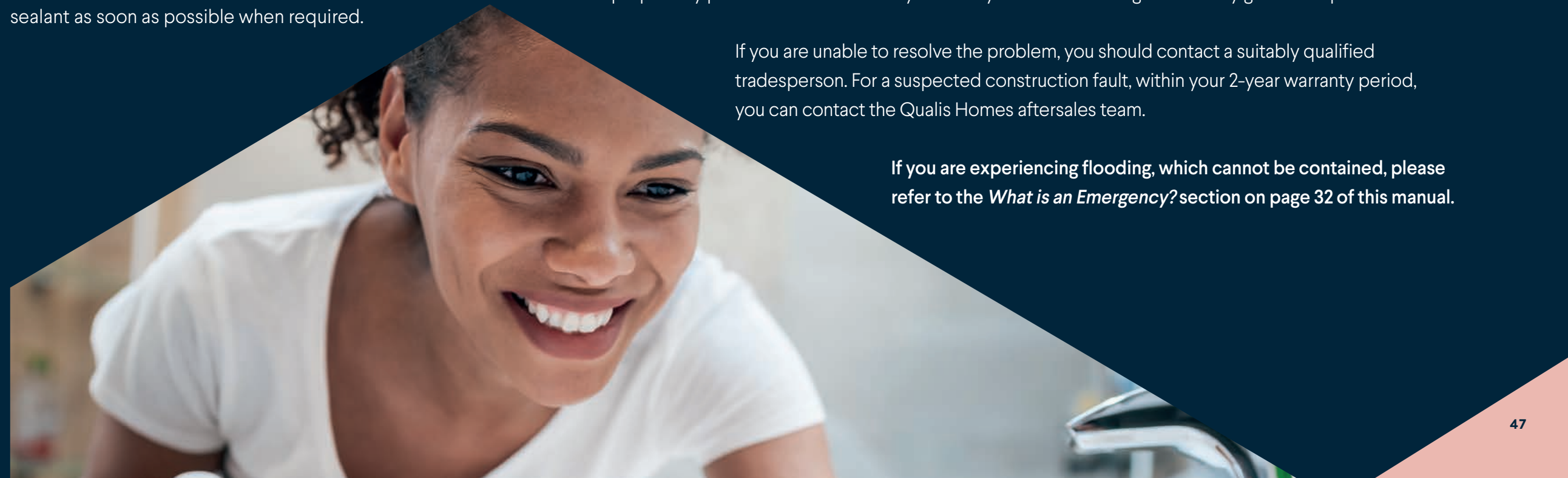
Using plug filters can help to prevent blockages by catching any dirt and debris before it enters the system.

To dispose of grease, fat and oil, either wipe up or pour into a container before placing in the bin.

If you notice that water is draining slower than normal and you suspect you may have a blockage, a simple plunger can be very effective to dislodge small blockages. If this is unsuccessful, there are a range of proprietary products available. Always ensure you follow the usage and safety guidelines provided.

If you are unable to resolve the problem, you should contact a suitably qualified tradesperson. For a suspected construction fault, within your 2-year warranty period, you can contact the Qualis Homes aftersales team.

If you are experiencing flooding, which cannot be contained, please refer to the *What is an Emergency?* section on page 32 of this manual.



Karndeans vinyl flooring

Karndeans is a hard-wearing, stain-resistant floor covering that is designed to be easy to look after and maintain.

- 1 A soft brush can be used to sweep away dust and debris. If you prefer to use a vacuum cleaner, always check that it is suitable for use on this surface.
- 2 Regularly mop with Karndeans Clean, or a similar product suitable for vinyl flooring, to keep it looking its best.
- 3 Ensure all excess water is removed from the mop, as too much water significantly increases drying times and can cause damage to the flooring, which will not be covered by your warranty.
- 4 Any spillage should be mopped up as soon as possible to avoid damage or staining.
- 5 Karndeans also offer their own treatment for your flooring, which can be used periodically, usually every 12-18 months depending on usage, to help restore the finish and protect the surface.
- 6 Always refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning solutions.

Hard flooring can be slippery when wet, so always ensure you take appropriate precautions.

Attaching furniture rests to the bottom of furniture legs distributes weight and can help to protect the surface. Care should always be taken when moving furniture etc, to avoid scratching.

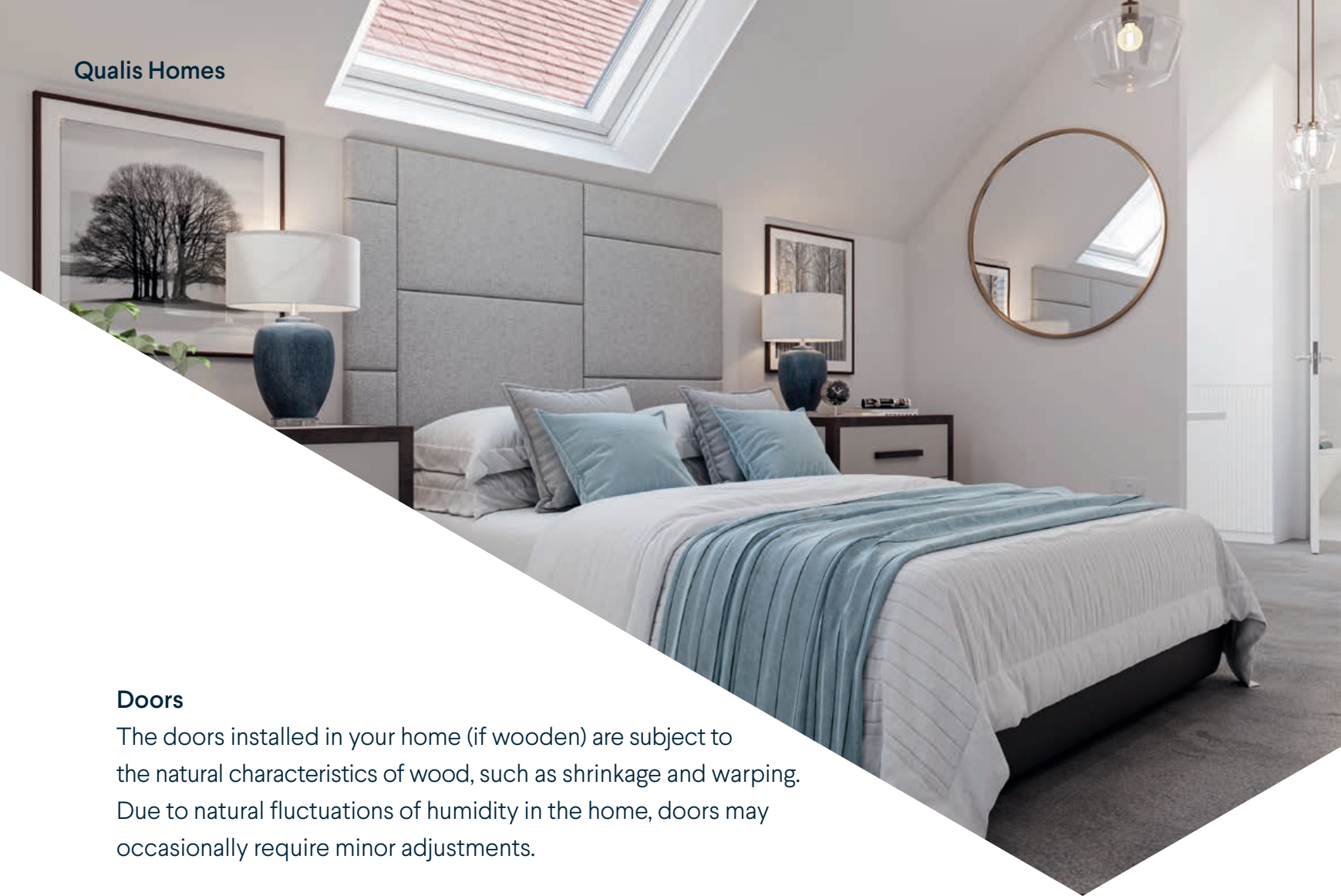


Carpet

Most carpeting offers built-in stain resistance which prevents spills and dirt from setting in the fibres. While most stain-resistant treatment is fairly effective, it's not a substitute for a prompt clean-up of household mishaps.

- Regular vacuuming and occasional cleaning, using a suitable carpet cleaning solution for tough stains or built-up dirt, should keep your carpets looking their best. Always test a small, inconspicuous area before use.
- Attaching furniture rests to the bottom of furniture legs distributes weight and can help to protect the carpet. Care should always be taken when moving furniture to avoid pulling.
- Shading is normal with all carpets. It is caused by the way the pile is sitting and how the light then reflects differently.
- Refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of your floor coverings.

Although very unlikely, should we need to replace your flooring in any area, every endeavour will be made to provide a match. However, where this is not possible, we will only provide a replacement for the affected room.



Doors

The doors installed in your home (if wooden) are subject to the natural characteristics of wood, such as shrinkage and warping. Due to natural fluctuations of humidity in the home, doors may occasionally require minor adjustments.

'Sticking' can occur, particularly in new build properties. If you experience this issue during a damp season, do not sand or plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes. Applying a suitable lubricant to the offending area can often reduce the effect. Only a small amount ought to be required and any excess should be wiped off immediately.

Through normal use, hinge screws can become loose, these can be tightened as necessary. Applying a silicone lubricant to hinges can cure squeaking, the use of oil is not recommended as this can attract dirt and dust. Use a cloth to wipe away any excess.

Minor separations to the door trim can normally be repaired using a suitable filler or caulking compound. This would be considered part of your general home maintenance. However, if you have any queries, and you are within your 2-year warranty, you can contact the Qualis Homes aftersales team.

These points may also apply to any wooden windows you have within your home.

Fire doors within your home, and also within communal corridors for apartments, should always be kept closed. This is the resident's responsibility. To ensure performance, these should remain as fitted, with no hooks, etc, added.

Plasterboard

Normal shrinkage in plasterboard can cause minor cracks and nail pops (raised nail heads) to appear. Popped nails should not affect the strength of the wall and can be re-seated using a suitable nail punch and hammer. Repair can be easily made using suitable filler pastes, sanding and repainting. This work is best done when you redecorate the room and is regarded as general home maintenance. However, if you have any queries, and you are within your 2-year warranty, you can contact the Qualis Homes aftersales team.

Interior decoration

Walls and ceilings can be painted to suit your own colour scheme. To allow your home to continue to dry out, we recommend water based paints. Where possible, consider delaying your redecoration to allow your home to settle in and do not hang wallpaper coverings for at least 12 months.

External woodwork and finishes

External finishes will dull over time. To extend the appearance, where appropriate, wash on a regular basis.

All external woodwork should be repainted or stained periodically to preserve the wood. This will probably first be required after 2 years, but you may need to do this sooner in exposed areas.

Attaching items to walls and ceilings

Before fixing shelving, curtain poles, lighting or any other items to the internal walls and ceilings, ensure that no electrical services or pipework are concealed behind the intended fixing area.

Wall and ceiling types vary throughout your home. The type of fitting should be considered as appropriate for the fixing area and item to be fixed. Particular attention should be taken for heavier items, to ensure the fixing area can accommodate the weight. If in doubt, seek advice from a qualified tradesperson.

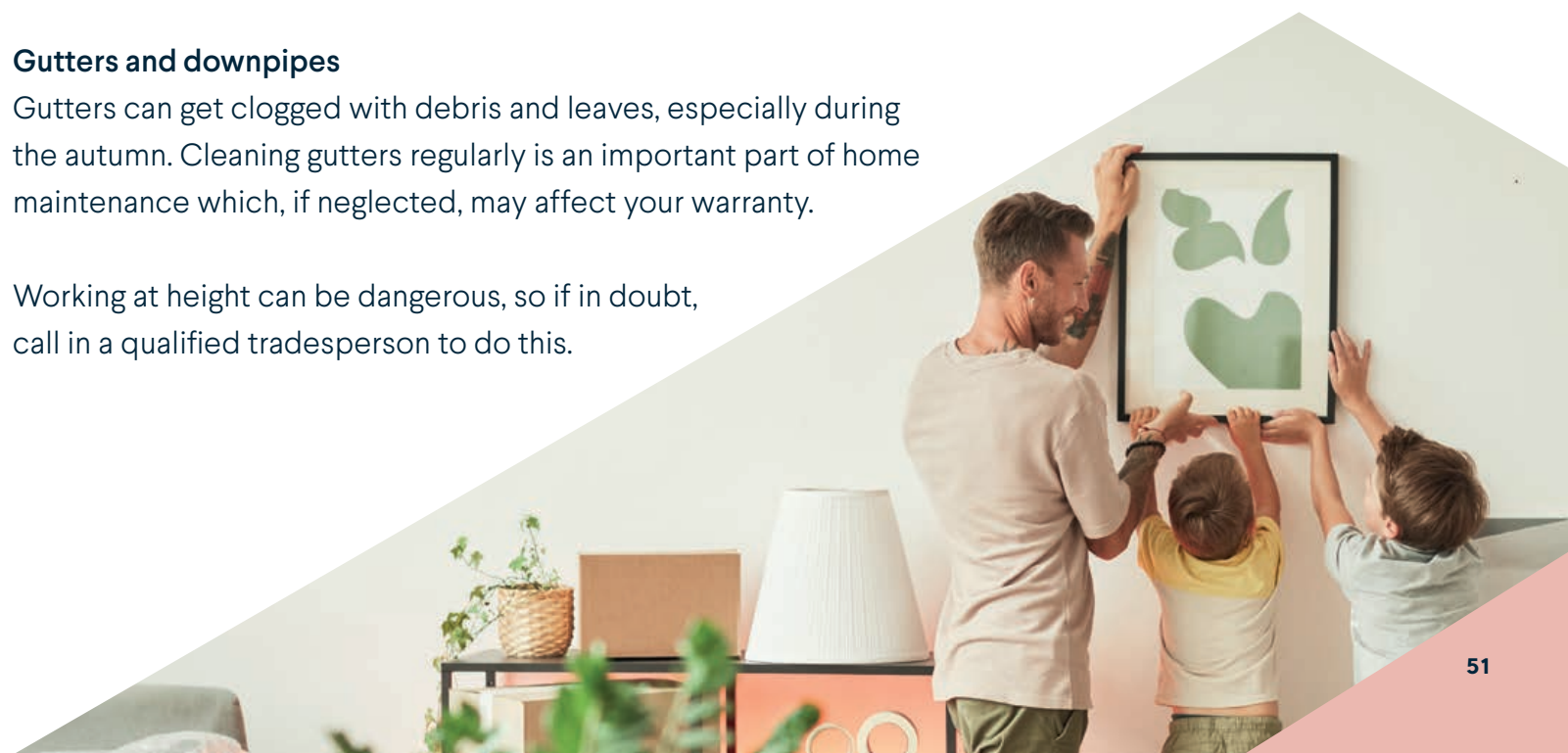
Roofs

Working at height can be dangerous and should be carried out by trained professionals using the correct equipment. Roof surfaces vary and can be easily damaged. Ensure any works in this area include a suitable access method.

Gutters and downpipes

Gutters can get clogged with debris and leaves, especially during the autumn. Cleaning gutters regularly is an important part of home maintenance which, if neglected, may affect your warranty.

Working at height can be dangerous, so if in doubt, call in a qualified tradesperson to do this.



Infestation

Wasps, mice and other pests can enter your home; this is not normally caused by a build defect. Please contact a professional pest control company for further advice.

Garden

Your new home may have a garden with grass. This needs care to allow it to bed in and become an established lawn.



Always try to stay off newly laid turf for at least 4–6 weeks, especially if it's been laid in wet conditions or in the winter.



If your lawn was laid in dry conditions, keep it well watered. Water the lawn in the morning or evening to avoid the grass drying out in the sun.



Wait until roots establish in the soil before mowing. New turf takes at least one season to settle properly. When you do mow it, set the blades on the highest setting to just snip off the top.



Additional lawn care may be necessary, including feeding and aerating. This should be done in accordance with established methods.

Shrubs and trees

It can take a few years for your new shrubs and trees to fully establish themselves. During this time it is important that they are regularly checked and watered.

Before planting any additional landscaping, you should always carefully consider the location. Root paths can become quite extensive and if not given sufficient space, could interfere with property foundations, external surfaces, drainage and other services. This is why it is important to establish a seasonal pruning plan, especially for larger trees and shrubs.

As the landscaping matures, you may wish to cut back any branches that overhang your property. As a considerate member of your new development community, please discuss your proposals with adjacent owners. Certain, usually mature, trees may be subject to planning restrictions. Please check with your local authority before carrying out any works.



Garden gates and fences

Wooden gates and fences should be regularly checked for any areas of concern which may require spot treatment.

A routine of cleaning and treating, using a specialist product, should be adopted to prolong the lifespan. The frequency of this will vary depending on the weather conditions, the type of wood and maintenance product used, but is generally annually/biannually. Always ensure you follow the product usage and safety guidelines provided.



Outside taps

Little maintenance is required for outside taps, except during the winter months, when frost is expected. If the tap is fitted with an internal service valve, turn it off and then open the outside tap to drain the water in the pipe. Close the tap and fit an insulated tap cover. Remember to re-open the service valve when you want to use the tap again.



Driveways and paths

The construction of your driveway (if included) has been designed for domestic use only and is not suitable for heavy vehicles. This includes removal vehicles.

Surface finishes may vary and can, over time, be affected by cracking due to constant exposure to the elements; sun, rain, frost, etc. Avoid wheel turning when stationary, as this can cause damage to the surface, particularly when newly laid or in summer months. Such damage and cracking is not covered by your home warranty.

Weeds can appear between joints, particularly block paving. Be sure to remove/treat weeds as soon as possible.



Changes to your home

If you decide, at any time, to make changes to your new home, it is important to remember:

- Any changes you wish to make must abide by your contractual agreement with Qualis, often known as the covenant.
- Should you wish to add an extension or make any additions/alterations to your home, always check the local authority planning regulations, as the work may be subject to planning permission or permitted development rights.
- Any changes you do make will not be covered by your Qualis warranty or the Build-Zone 10-year warranty and may also adversely affect all or part of your warranty cover. Please check with us before you proceed with any planned works.
- Generally, for any changes you wish to make, if you're at all unsure, please contact us and we will be happy to advise you.

Always seek advice from a suitably trained and qualified professional in advance of any works.

Please note, this guide is intended to assist the homeowner only to understand the initial maintenance requirements for their new home and does not replace professional advice.

It is not a comprehensive maintenance manual and should be referred to for guidance purposes only. Always seek advice from a qualified professional if you are unsure or need further help.

Repair and maintenance instructions provided by the manufacturer should always take precedence.

Health and safety is our priority, if in doubt always seek professional advice before commencing any works or maintenance.



Championing Sustainability

At Qualis Homes, we're passionate about building homes for the future. Our homes are innovative both in their design and development. To us, minimum standards are just a starting point and we're committed to going above and beyond to achieve more.

Qualis homes are built with the next and future generations in mind and utilise low-carbon construction methods, as well as locally-sourced materials. We take pride in incorporating high-performing glazing and insulation, together with modern, efficient heating and ventilation systems. As a result, you could save up to 64% on your energy bills – that's an estimated household saving of £183* a month.

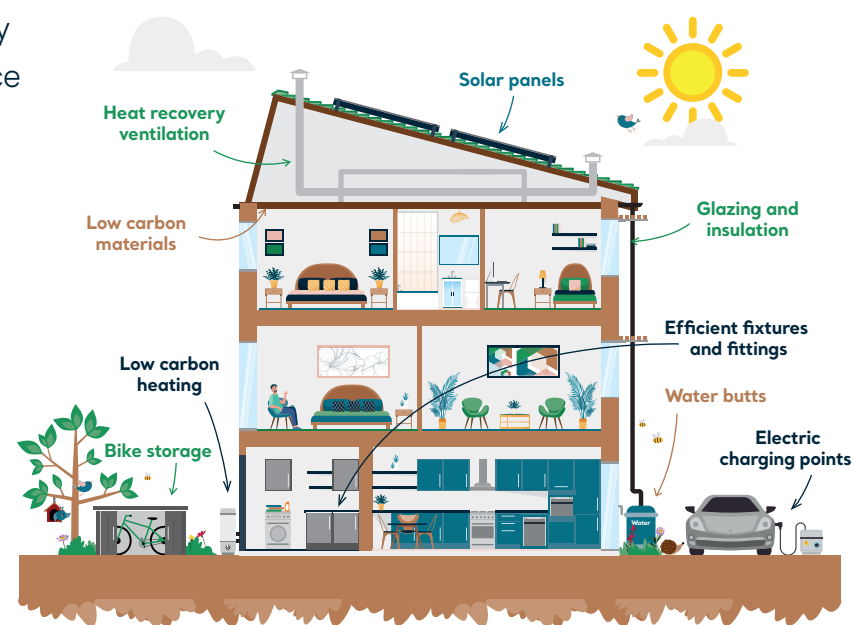
We recognise that sustainability isn't just about how we live in our homes, it's also about how we travel to and from them; it's the little things that can make a big difference.

The locations of our developments are carefully considered and take full advantage of the choice of transport links available within the district.

Many offer on-site electric vehicle charging, bike storage and car clubs, so our residents have the option to make sustainable choices and lower their carbon footprint.

Biodiversity is essential to supporting our environment. Our developments include a wealth of sensitively selected plants and trees that run, ribbon-like, throughout the landscape. These enriching green spaces not only promote a healthy ecosystem but also help foster a sense of community in harmony with nature.

We respect our natural surroundings, establishing seasonal changes and nesting patterns as part of our programmes and incorporating animal-friendly features across our developments. So if you take a closer look, you may see a hedgehog out for a walk, or a bird or bee on the way back to their Qualis home.



Features may vary across developments and plots.



New build sustainability smarts

Most Qualis homes have an energy efficiency rating of band A or B, while just **4%** of existing properties reached this same standard*.

On average, energy bills are up to **64%** cheaper in new build homes*.

This could save you up to **£2,207** each year on your energy bills*.









Reduce your carbon emissions by **61%** in a new build home*.

Use at least **28%** less water†.

*HBF, Watt a Save – August 2024. Features may vary across developments and plots. †Average new build homes use 100-110 litres/person/day compared to UK average of 140 litres/person/day according to the Energy Savings Trust – March 2024

Health and Safety

Your health and safety is paramount to us, that is why we have created some simple rules to follow:

-  Please come and visit us in the Sales and Marketing Suite if you have any questions or wish to view a home.
-  Construction areas can be dangerous. Entry is strictly by invitation only.
-  Please ensure children are accompanied and supervised at all times while visiting the development. For their safety, children are not permitted in the construction area.
-  Do not enter any buildings or areas under construction unless accompanied by a Qualis Homes representative.
-  Full personal protective clothing is required for all construction visits. All guests to the construction area are required to abide by site rules and follow the directions given by their guide at all times.
-  Please be aware road surfaces may not be complete. Pedestrians must use the walkways provided and drivers reduce speed.
-  Parking is restricted, please only use the designated bays if provided or speak to your Sales Advisor for alternative options.
-  If you have any concerns regarding Health and Safety, or if you have sustained an injury on the development, please contact the sales or site team immediately.

Please respect the rules.

Construction sites can be very dangerous places...



STAY SAFE, BE AWARE

Keeping in Touch – Complaints and Escalations

At Qualis Homes, we’re committed to providing our customers with a quality, personal service, together with homes to be proud of.

In case we’ve missed the mark and haven’t met your expectations, you can be assured that we have a thorough and transparent complaints policy in place ready to assist you in finding a fair and amicable solution.

Our complaints and escalation policy breaks down into three stages:



Stage 1

Sharing your concerns.

Stage 2

Taking it further.

Stage 3

Seeing independent resolution.

If you would prefer to appoint a suitable representative to manage this process for you, it’s important you let us know this in writing, in advance.

Sharing your concerns

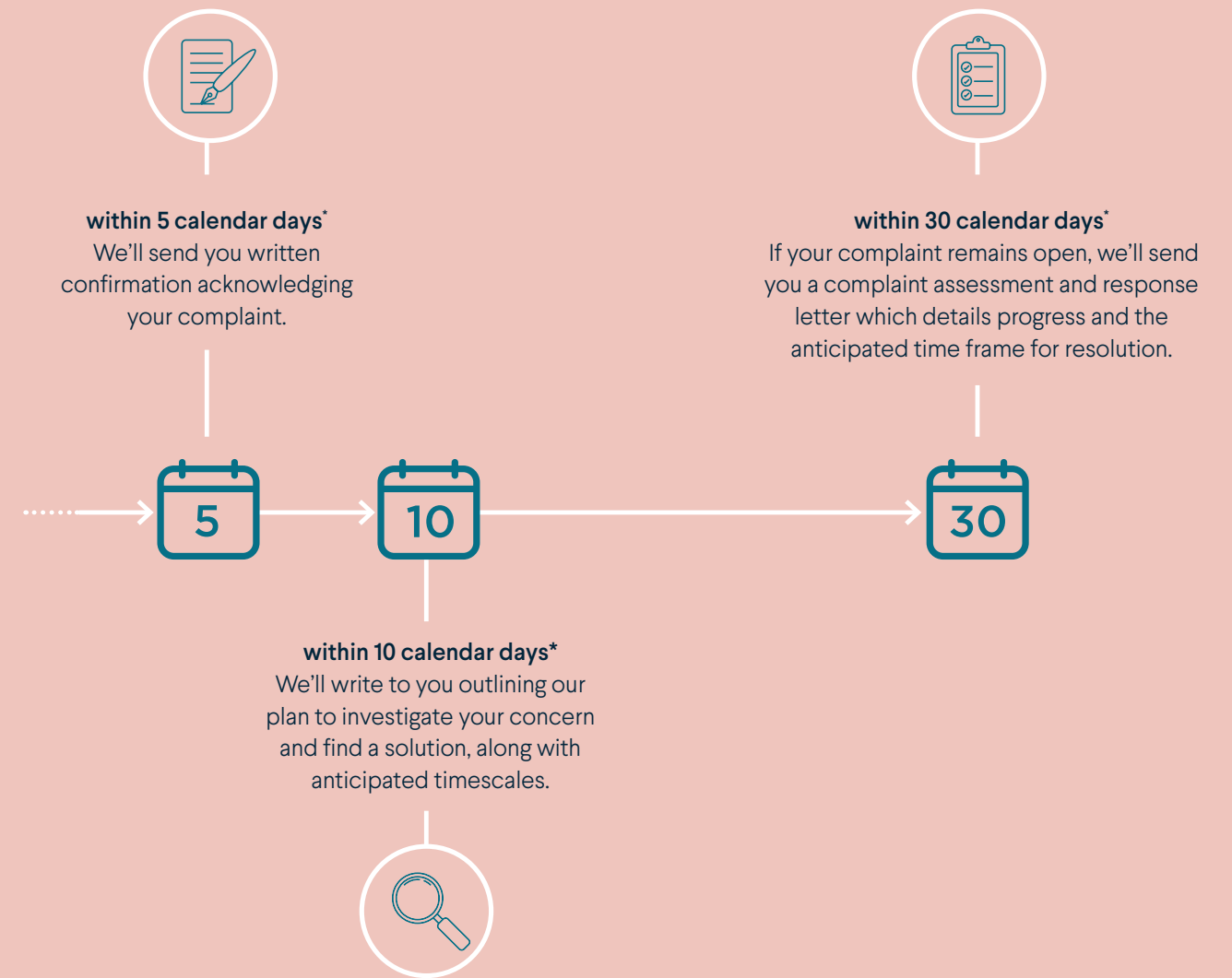
Our aftersales team is here to address any concerns you might have. If you feel it’s necessary to make a complaint please make sure you provide us with:





- Your name
- Your address
- Your preferred contact information
- A clear description of your complaint, along with any previous contact regarding this issue
- Any relevant supporting materials, like photographs

You can raise your concerns via email, phone, or written communication.

Here’s how to reach us

-  0333 230 0462
-  aftersales@qualishomes.co.uk
-  Qualis Homes
323 High Street
Epping CM16 4BZ



-  If the complaint is not accepted by us, then we’ll provide a clear explanation as to why we’ve reached that decision. We’ll also include information about how to escalate the matter, should you feel it necessary, and the option to refer it to an independent resolution service.
-  If the resolution extends beyond the agreed-upon time frame, we’ll send a follow-up letter explaining the additional steps and time needed to bring the matter to a conclusion.
-  Once your complaint has been resolved, you’ll receive a Closure Letter detailing all the steps taken. In the very unlikely event that we have not closed the complaint within **56 calendar days*** we will send you an eight-week letter. This will include a clear summary of actions taken to date, what is still outstanding and the reasons why. Additionally, we’ll outline the actions required for resolution, with the associated timescales.
-  We’ll ensure you are kept updated and are provided with written updates within **28 calendar days** of your last correspondence.

We’re committed to working with you until a satisfactory solution is achieved.

*From the first business day the complaint was received by us.

Taking it further

If you're not satisfied with how your complaint is being handled, you have the option to take it a step further by using our internal dispute resolution service.

Should you feel you require this service, please contact the aftersales team, providing details as to why you're escalating the issue.

We call escalated complaints 'disputes'. Once we receive your dispute, our aftersales team will inform the relevant Department Head who will oversee the resolution process. **Within 5 calendar days***, you'll receive an acknowledgement of your dispute, along with an estimate of how long it will take to investigate the concerns raised. Our goal is to resolve all disputes **within 28 calendar days*** from acknowledgement.

In the event that the resolution offered by the Department Head is not to your satisfaction, you may ask for it to be further escalated to the Managing Director, who will review the complaint in accordance with the above timescales.

Seeking independent resolution

Our internal policies and procedures are designed to assist our customers to reach agreeable resolutions – this is our top priority.

If your concern isn't addressed to your satisfaction, you may be able to approach Build-Zone, your warranty provider, for matters that fall under the structural warranty and warranty cover. For anything else, you may be able to contact the Consumer Code for New Homes.

For information about escalating your complaint to Build-Zone, please refer to their Homebuyer's Guide which has been provided with this manual, or visit their website: <https://www.build-zone.com>.

Further details about the Consumer Code for New Homes complaint process can be found in their Code document provided with this manual or by visiting their website <https://www.consumercodefornewhomes.com>.

The Consumer Code for New Homes will assess the nature of the complaint, and if appropriate provide details of the Independent Dispute Resolution Service (IDRS).

Please ensure you read all the documentation before making any decision to file a complaint.

The options provided do not affect your normal legal rights.

*From the first business day the dispute was received by us.

Qualis terms and conditions apply. All content within this document is indicative only. It is provided for guidance purposes only based on the information available at that time and does not replace professional advice. Manufacturers' repair and maintenance instructions should always take precedence. Qualis Homes reserves the right to make any changes at any time. All specification items are development and plot specific. We reserve the right to vary these at any time or substitute for alternative products, makes, models or manufacturers. Computer generated images are indicative only and can be subject to change. Images depict typical Qualis homes. Information is correct at the time of going to print. September 2024.

