



Looking after your new home

Here are some useful tips to ensure trouble free enjoyment of your new Hollins home:

MAINTENANCE OF PLUMBING

1. Always consult a qualified plumber and close the main stopcock before working on the plumbing and heating system.
2. Take care when fixing down carpets or drilling into walls - find out where the pipes run to avoid nailing through them.
3. During winter, to avoid frozen pipes, try and leave some background heating on all the time.
4. Make sure the stopcock to any outside taps are shut off over winter and drain off the tap.
5. Turn your central heating on regularly during the summer. This will highlight any potential problems to be rectified before the cold weather arrives.
6. To obtain the most efficient results, leave all radiators on when the system is operating and regulate individual room temperatures by using the thermostatic controls on the appropriate radiators.
7. Always use a **gas safe** registered engineer to service your central heating system annually to comply with your warranty.

MAINTENANCE OF ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

1. Most electrical problems are caused by faulty conditions of bulbs, appliances, or extension leads and plugs - make sure that you replace these at the first sign of wear and/or damage.
2. Treat your electrical system with care - it can kill. Before starting any work on an electric circuit always consult a qualified electrician and switch off the electric supply at the mains.
3. We install smoke/heat detectors as standard in your new Hollins home. Please note that they are live wired into the RCD unit. The system operates with a battery backup which should be checked regularly.

VENTILATION IS IMPORTANT

1. Keep your new Hollins home well ventilated during the drying out process which can last 9 to 12 months. Try to keep areas such as under stairs cupboards well ventilated by keeping doors ajar. If you are going on holiday, keep all internal doors ajar to help with ventilation. Lack of ventilation will result in condensation and surface mould.
2. Do not leave the loft access open in cold spells. Heat will escape from your home, forming condensation.
3. Do not obstruct the ventilation in your loft space - this may cause condensation. Your loft space is not designed for storage.

SHRINKAGE IS NORMAL

1. To minimise shrinkage cracks, try to keep your central heating down to a comfortable level to allow your new Hollins home to dry out slowly. Generally, the slower your home dries out the better.
2. During the first year, walls are subjected to stress as the various construction materials expand, contract and stabilise within their new environment. Thus, nail popping and minor cracking may occur. These minor defects are usually simple to repair with the use of decorator's caulk or plaster compound filler. It may be desirable to delay major decorating or wallpapering until the drying out process is complete as potential nail pops or cracks could affect a newly decorated wall.
3. When touching up paintwork, there is a strong possibility that these painted areas will not exactly match the existing paint due to fading.

MAINTAINING THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR NEW HOLLINS HOME

1. We advise you have someone regularly check gutters and gullies and clean them if necessary. Ensure that no garden material or soil covers the damp proof course and airbricks. Soil and any paving or patio areas should be kept 150mm (6 inches) below the damp proof course.
2. DO allow time for the plants and grass to bed in, taking care to keep them sufficiently watered and avoid heavy use of grassed areas until good growth has been established, especially during dry spells.
3. Improve the natural drainage of your garden by planting a selection of shrubs, flowers, etc.
4. Keep your new grass watered.
5. Wait until your lawn has established before cutting it.
6. Set your mower at its highest level for the initial cut and gradually lower it as the lawn becomes more robust.
7. Feed your lawn each spring and through the summer.
8. Correct lawn surface irregularities by using compost dressing rather than using a roller.
9. Aerate your lawn in autumn with a garden fork to encourage healthy root growth and natural drainage.

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE

1. Door furniture should be kept clean and wiped with a soft cloth. Do not use abrasive cleaners. Outdoor fixtures are vulnerable to tarnishing and pitting.

2. Do not use too much water on your vinyl, wood or tiled floors, instead frequent vacuuming and dry mopping should increase their serviceability. Occasional vigorous cleaning should not harm if dried thoroughly.
3. Ceramic tile and similar products will require regular cleaning to remove normal build-up of surface dust, soap, and other deposits. Use detergent or non-abrasive ceramic tile cleaner.
4. DON'T use cream cleaners, solvent based sprays, powder abrasives, metal polishes or bleach on your taps and accessories as this will invalidate any manufacturers guarantees.
5. DO use good quality bathroom cleaner for your bathroom suites and ceramic tiles and always give them a thorough rinse to remove all traces of the cleaner to guarantee that extra sparkle!
6. DO use a clean, soft, damp cloth to remove any watermarks regularly from chrome-plated items and consult the manufacturer's website for specific care instructions.
7. DON'T use abrasive cleaners on acrylic surfaces as this will cause scratches.
8. It is so much easier to wipe up spillages on kitchen work surfaces - whether liquid or food - immediately rather than leaving them and risking permanent stain.
9. Use water and non-abrasive cream cleaner to maintain your kitchen work surfaces.
10. Use a non-scratch scourer with non-abrasive cream cleaner to tackle stubborn kitchen stains.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR BRAND NEW FITTED KITCHEN

1. Do not place hot dishes onto your kitchen work surface.
2. Do not place or use a hot iron on a kitchen worktop surface.
3. Do not make contact with naked flames or embers on kitchen work surfaces - cigarettes, lit matches, etc.
4. Do not cut directly onto your kitchen work surfaces - always use a cutting board.
5. Do not boil electric kettles over any joints in your kitchen work surfaces, or under kitchen wall units.