



LEARNING FROM CODE ADJUDICATIONS: ADVICE FOR HOME BUILDERS

FACTSHEET 3: ACCESSIBLE AFTER SALE SERVICE

How easy is it for your customers to contact you, request help or raise a complaint after they have moved in? As part of the Code's ongoing commitment to helping developers learn from past complaints, this factsheet looks at the learning from some of the recent decisions made by adjudicators acting for our Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme in relation to Requirement 4.1 – that Home Builders must provide an accessible after sale service.

To read about the other common areas where complaints have arisen, download the remaining factsheets from our website.

SECTION 4.1: Accessible After Sales Service

The Code states that Home Builders must explain:

- what the after sale service includes
- who to contact
- what guarantees and warranties apply to the Home.

Adjudicators found evidence of breaches such as:

“the after-sales service has not been accessible due to: the delay between the snagging list and the first attempt at repair of the floor; failure to respond to emails; the failure to pass on information”

“The obligation to provide after-care must be implemented as well as described”

“an accessible after-sales service would facilitate the prompt completion of remedial works of this significance. I find that the failure to take prompt action was a breach of section 4.1”

KEY LEARNING POINTS

While the Code does not directly cover build quality issues, you are required to explain to the home buyer that you are responsible for remedying relevant defects arising under the home warranty two-year liability defect period and that you provide an after sales service and complaints process to put things right.

- Provide the contact details of whom the home buyer should raise any concerns with.
- Deal with any enquiries in a timely manner and this includes dealing with any necessary repairs (including the use of sub-contractors).
- Set timescales by when any issues will be remedied and then comply with them.
- If problems arise, keep the home buyer informed and consider alternative remedies. This could include a financial remedy for inconvenience caused if appropriate.
- Keep notes of conversations with home buyers including dates/times, who has spoken to them and about what.
- Follow up discussions in writing/by email, including how any concerns raised have been, or will be, addressed and by when.

TOP TIP:

It is not enough to say you provide an after sales service – you must make it clear to home buyers how they can access it and what it covers.



FEEDBACK

Don't forget that online training is available to you, your staff and your agents to help improve customer service and compliance with the Code.

For more information or to suggest ideas for information you would like to receive, please email: secretariat@consumercode.co.uk