



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 Home Builder did not have suitable systems in place to ensure service commitments were met and did not have an adequate after-sales service through which it dealt with the issues raised regarding outstanding and defective works”.

“The Home Builder has provided the customer with a poor level of after sales service because it delayed considerably in investigating the issues the Home Buyer raised and this delay has caused the Home Buyer distress and inconvenience”.

“The Home Buyer has provided several email trails, which I consider show many attempts to engage with the Home Builder in relation to alleged issues and repairs....Taken in the whole, I do not consider that the after-sales service provided was accessible”.

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