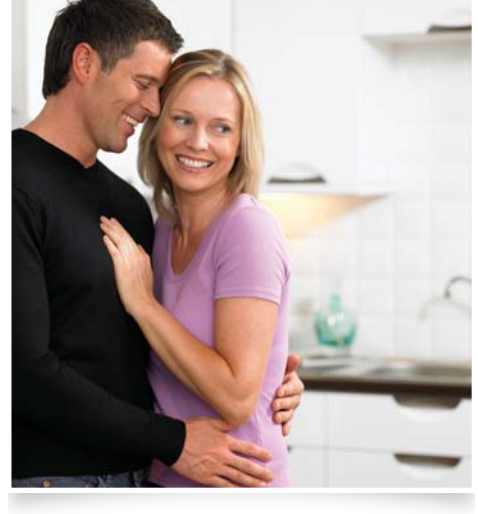


Your New Home



The following is designed to provide a concise and easily digestible guide to your new Yuill home and all of its major features.

For more detailed information, please refer to the comprehensive 'NHBC Guide to Your New Home', which you will find in the NHBC section at the back of this folder.

Electricity, Gas and Water Mains Control Points

The location of all three mains control points will be pointed out to you by our Site Manager on the day you move in. Make sure that everyone who lives there knows where to find them so that they can be accessed quickly in case of emergency.

Services

Electricity

Electricity is cabled into an electricity meter situated within your home before passing through to the control box which contains the main On/Off switch and a series of circuit breakers.

These breakers protect the individual electrical circuits that feed the electricity supply to the various areas of your home.

Your responsibilities:

- **All cables and electrical equipment inside your home are your responsibility.**
- **Everything outside, including the incoming cable and meter, remains the property of your electricity provider.**

Safety Tips

- Do not attempt any of the electrical installation in your home. Always contact a qualified electrician to carry out any repairs or fault-finding.
- Don't overload the system by using plug adaptors - stick to one plug per socket.

- Water and electricity don't mix - never take appliances into a bathroom, cloakroom or en suite and always switch off and unplug your kettle before filling/pouring.
- Avoid crossed wires - make sure you know the correct way to wire a plug. If not, refer to the NHBC Guide or ask a qualified electrician.
- Problem solving - don't keep resetting a circuit breaker or replacing a fuse without correcting the fault. If unsure, call an electrician.
- Use a cable detector before drilling walls to locate cabling.

Gas

Gas is brought into your home through a service pipe which ends at the control valve by the meter.

If you think you have a gas leak:

- Extinguish all naked flames and cigarettes.
- Do not switch on any lights or other electrical switches as these can create sparks which could cause an explosion.
- Turn off the gas supply at the meter.
- Open as many doors and windows as you can to disperse the gas, and organise a Corgi registered plumber to fix the leak and test.
- Call the local gas company out on their emergency number (look in the phone book under 'Gas') - there will be no call out charge.

Water

Your water is fed in from underground pipes to the border of your property. The water mains stop valve is situated at the point where the water enters the home - usually under the kitchen sink, but your Yuill Homes' team will have notified you if otherwise. You will find your meter unit located on the footpath/adjacent highway verge outside your home. Most commonly, your water will be provided by a combi boiler, with cold water fed from the main supply. Less commonly, all water outlet points will be fed direct from the main supply rather than via a tank. Here are some handy hints to avoid the most common plumbing problems:

In cold or frosty weather:

- Leave some heating on at all times to prevent frozen pipes.
- If you know you are going to be away for a long period over winter you must drain down the whole system or ensure the heating is switched on for at least an hour a day.
- Do not turn on the hot water if you suspect you have frozen pipes - you will drain your hot water tank and this can cause ongoing problems.
- Shut off the stopcock to any outside taps but leave the actual outside tap open to drain the excess water.

In normal conditions:

- Turn off the supply at the mains if you are planning to work on any part of the system.
- If water overflows from storage tanks, call a plumber.
- The toilet cistern overflow is no longer manufactured to be piped to the outside of your home. This means the cisterns now overflow directly into the toilet bowl, making it easier for you to monitor and arrange repair as soon as conveniently possible if necessary.
- Don't put tea leaves, coffee grounds or other waste down the sink.
- Make sure you know the location of underfloor pipes before fixing down carpets, etc.
- Nappies are not to be flushed down the toilet.

Keeping Up Appearances

Taps and wastes

To maintain optimum good looks, from time to time simply wipe chrome and gold finish taps and wastes with a mild detergent on a soft, damp cloth and dry with a clean, soft cloth. Never use abrasive/chemical cleaners or concentrated bleach.

Sinks

To prolong that brand-new look, we advise that you:

- Use a soft, damp, soapy cloth to wipe down after each use, then rinse.
- Apply a mild detergent to remove limescale build-up in hard water areas and prevent long-term staining.
- Take care when handling hard or sharp objects to avoid unsightly scratching.
- Immediately rinse with plenty of clean water if any of the following substances come into contact with your sink:

1. Silver dip cleaners.
2. Corrosive foodstuffs, e.g. fruit juice, salt, vinegar, mustard paste, pickles and salad dressings (including mayonnaise).
3. Acids.
4. Strong bleaches. (NB: products diluted to the strength recommended by the manufacturer are OK to use.)

The 'Running In' Process

All new homes contain a high level of moisture - an inevitable and unavoidable result of the construction process.

You probably won't even notice it and it certainly won't cause you or your belongings any harm, but your home does need to be able to dry out slowly over the first few months.

Drying out

Small cracks will inevitably appear as timber and plaster dry out and shrink. To minimise:

- Use central heating sparingly at first to avoid drying out too quickly.
- Thereafter, try and keep the temperature of your home fairly constant.

Ventilation

The evaporated moisture needs to be ventilated away to minimise dampness and condensation, so:

- Open doors, windows and trickle vents as often as possible.
- Leave internal and built-in cupboard doors open a few inches to allow good air circulation.

Minimising condensation

Apart from following the advice already given about drying out and ventilation, you should also:

- Keep bathroom and kitchen doors shut and windows/vents open when in use.
- Keep boiling pans covered and don't leave kettles boiling.
- Open a window when drying clothes indoors.
- Not use bottled gas or paraffin heaters.

Efflorescence

This is a white deposit that can form on outside or inside walls and is another common consequence of drying out. The marks outside can be brushed off and will eventually disappear. Inside, they can be wiped or brushed away. Do not attempt to wash salts off interior walls as this may damage them.

Care of PVC-U Windows and Doors

The following hints and tips will help you maintain the smooth running and ensure the long life of your windows and doors:

- Regularly lubricate all visible parts of the locking mechanism and hinges with the window/door open.
- Wipe regularly with warm soapy water (try neat washing up liquid, a wet cloth and a firm, circular action for stubborn marks).
- Wash any polished brass/gold anodised components with a mild detergent and finish with a non-abrasive wax polish (not metal polish) to prolong good looks.

Never use corrosive cleaners, sandpapers, chemicals or sharp/metal instruments on any PVC-U fittings.

The Loft

Your loft is fully insulated to provide optimum energy efficiency. Please note the following important points:

- Do not cut away or remove any loft timbers - they are all necessary.
- Always use a mask and gloves when handling insulation material.
- Keep loft vents free from obstruction to prevent condensation.
- Don't store anything in the loft that could be damaged by cold or damp.
- Your loft is not designed to withstand very heavy weights.

Getting the best from your central heating system

Our team will have explained how your system works and you will also have been supplied with a detailed guide from the boiler manufacturer.

General maintenance and advice

- Get your boiler checked by a heating expert if it shows any signs of leaking or corrosion.
- Call in a qualified electrician if there appears to be any problem at all with the electrical supply to your boiler.
- Never obstruct the flue.
- Get your central heating system serviced annually.

Remember: Lower temperature settings offer better economy.

Frost thermostat (if fitted)

A frost/pipe thermostat will only be fitted to your boiler if it is in an area of the home that is susceptible to low temperatures and it will have been automatically set to ensure the boiler remains on if the temperature approaches freezing.

Combi boilers

If you have a combi boiler, the system will fire up automatically whenever you switch on the hot water. This provides you with instant hot water and means you will not have a separate hot water cylinder.

Central heating thermostat

Set this at the temperature you feel most comfortable and adjust as necessary. For the best fuel economy don't overheat your home and don't control the room temperature by opening doors and windows.

Thermostat radiator valves (where applicable)

Valve settings tend to be numbered from 1 to 8. We suggest a setting of 3 or 4 in the bedroom, 3 in the kitchen and 6 or 7 in living rooms.

Hot water cylinder thermostat (if installed)

If you have a hot water cylinder, you should set its thermostat midway to start with then adjust as required (Max 60°).

Setting the programmer/timer for heating and hot water

This device allows you to select the frequency, time and duration that your boiler operates during every 24 hours. You can also choose hot water/heating together or hot water/heating separately.

Yuill Homes advise that for optimum heating:

- Set the boiler to come on twice per day.
- Set the system to come on around one hour before you get up.
- If you are out during the day, set it to go off half an hour before you leave the house and come on again an hour before you return home.
- Turn the system off half an hour before you go to bed.

Meanwhile, if you require hot water only and you don't have a combi boiler (see separate section):

- Turn on for around an hour and a half in the morning and again late afternoon - this should provide enough for all your hot water requirements, but can be adjusted if not.
- Use the override button to move on to the next setting.

Remember: Your system may need setting at the beginning and end of British Summer Time, although some systems now do this automatically.

Bleeding radiator

'Bleeding' will be required if you notice that any radiator is not heating up evenly. This means that you have an air lock that needs to be removed as soon as possible to avoid rusting inside the radiator.

How?

- Turn the heating off at the main timer.
- Hold a cloth under the air valve at the top of the radiator and slowly open it using the special key* until you hear the hiss of the air escaping.
- Close the valve again as soon as any water appears.

* This will have been provided when you moved in.

Never paint over bleed valves when decorating.

Remember: Should the central heating system ever have to be drained, ensure that anti-corrosion additives are replenished when it is refilled.

Hot water cylinder thermostat (if installed)

If you have a hot water cylinder, you should set its thermostat midway to start with and then adjust as required (Max 60°).

What To Do If You Are Going Away

In Summer time:

- Turn system off at main programmer/timer.

Note: if you turn off the gas and electricity, you will need to relight the pilot and reset the timer on your return.

In Winter time:

- Turn off the hot water only, but set the heating to continuous.
- Select a low setting for room thermostats.

Shutting off a radiator

Whilst it is economical to switch off radiators in rooms that are not in use, it is probably better to keep all radiators at a low setting. You must never shut off a radiator in rooms where there are thermostats fitted.

Gutterings

We advise you to clean gutters at least once a year to prevent blockages.

Window cleaning

If you are having the windows cleaned, instruct a local window cleaning company to carry out the work. If you can clean the windows yourself, ensure your own safety by confirming that any access to height is safe and steady and you have eliminated any risk of falling. Roof and porch tiles should not be walked on as they are easily damaged.

Damp-proof course and air bricks

Ensure that soil, paving and patios are kept at least 150mm below the damp-proof course and that air bricks are not covered up.

The Finishing Touches - DIY Advice

It's tempting to start personalising your home with your own choice of décor as soon as possible, but please bear the following in mind:

Interior painting

- Your walls will have been newly painted and need time to breathe and effectively dry out, so it's advisable not to repaint or paper for at least nine to twelve months.
- When you do redecorate, fill in any minor gaps and cracks that have appeared as a result of drying out.
- New woodwork will absorb more paint/stain the first time, so the finish will not be as good as with future repaints.

Exterior painting

- External woodwork should be repainted regularly with a good quality exterior paint product - summer and autumn are the best times to do this and remember, you must never paint on wet wood.

Wall fixings

- If you are fixing curtains, pictures, etc. to hollow walls (tap to find out) you will need to buy a special fixing device from your local DIY store.
- Use toggle bolts for medium weights or if you wish to fix to the ceiling.

Fire

For your safety and convenience, smoke detectors are already installed in your new home. These are powered by your mains electricity and also have a battery back-up. All smoke detectors should be cleaned and tested regularly.

Self closing fire doors are fitted in some of our properties. If you are replacing a door, please ensure a door of the same fire rating is used. Fire doors are only effective if the self closing device operates correctly. Check regularly to ensure that carpets or other features are not obstructing the door. If adjustment is necessary please consult the manufacturer.

WARNING: Smoke is as big a killer as flames. Evacuate your home at once if you can't put out the fire easily. Close doors behind you as you leave to prevent the fire from spreading, and dial the Fire Service on 999 as soon as you can after getting out.

New Home Warranty - NHBC Buildmark Cover

Yuill Homes pledge to remedy any defects reported to us in line with the NHBC Buildmark Cover scheme, details of which you will have received from your solicitor. There is also a comprehensive summary of the cover provided in the NHBC Guide to Your New Home provided within this folder.

Contact your Site Manager direct if you would like to discuss in more detail.

Please note that, as with all homes, you will need to arrange your own insurance cover if you require it in respect of house contents and buildings insurance. Although extensive, our warranties do not cover storm or accidental damage. For apartments please see specific management company arrangements.

Landscaping Your New Garden

Your garden will already have undergone an element of landscaping before you move in as part of the Yuill Homes' commitment to providing you with a quality and attractive home, and also to comply with local authority requirements.

Front and rear gardens are usually turfed to provide a starting point for your own landscaping.

Sometimes we may need access to your property to complete planting after you have moved in and we would very much appreciate your co-operation in gaining access.

Plants, shrubs and trees

The local authority usually specifies the variety and quantity of these, but upon completion the care of these items passes over to the homeowner. Let us know if any of the items we have supplied fails to grow or dies as it may be possible for us to replace it.

Grass

It is very important that you regularly mow, feed and water your lawn, especially in the early days after it is laid, here's how:

- As a general guide, it's worth carrying on watering your lawn regularly until the onset of the first winter in your new home.
- If the turf should happen to split during dry, hot spells, damp soil brushed into the cracks should help prevent further damage.

- Do not mow your lawn for the first two weeks after moving in.
- For the first two cuts mow with the blades set as high as possible. Cutting the lawn regularly will encourage better growth and ultimately help establish a lawn you can be proud of!
- We recommend a couple of applications of a good weedkiller and lawn food (try Evergreen 80 which performs both functions in one). April and September are the best times to do this. Please ensure that the correct Summer/Autumn/Winter feed is applied.

Shrubs and trees

Regular watering is vital to maintain the condition of shrubs and trees. Apart from this they need very little general care, we suggest you:

- Give all new trees at least one bucket of water every day that there is no rain during your first summer in your new home.
- Spray conifers weekly for the first three months.

Severe Weather Warnings

Frost

Outside taps are particularly prone to freezing during the cold weather. To prevent this problem, turn off the water supply to this tap leaving it turned on. This should also be done if you are going away for any length of time.

Storm damage

Your household insurance policy should cover you for damage caused by high winds, such as loss of roof tiles or fencing.

External footpaths and road surfacing

During the period of construction on the site, Yuill Homes are responsible for both the sewers and the roads until they are adopted by the relevant authorities. Once adoption is reached the responsibility for the roads is transferred to the local council, and the sewers become the responsibility of the local water authority.

Road and footpath surfacing must meet standards set by the council. These standards prevent small areas of surfacing work being undertaken as these are often weak and prone to erosion. Therefore the local authority will indicate which areas can be surfaced. This could mean that the roads or footpaths outside your new home are not finished when you move in.