Section 3 - Looking after the inside of your Home
Maintenance & DIY

Connecting appliances
Be careful if you are connecting kitchen appliances to the water supply and drainage. Check that hoses are properly connected and tightened before turning the water on. It is a good idea to recheck the connections once the appliances have been in use for a day or two. Dripping connections can cause serious damage.

Bleeding radiators
If you notice that a radiator is cool at the top this may indicate that there is air in the system. This is common particularly in systems that have been newly commissioned. To release the air first turn off the heating and allow the system to cool. Attach the radiator key to the bleed valve and turn it anti-clockwise. Open the valve with care as it can come out completely. Open it just enough to hear the hiss of the air escaping. Hold a cloth underneath the bleed valve to catch the water when the last of the air is released. When water comes out, close the bleed valve. If you have not been given a radiator key by the builder they are readily available from DIY and hardware stores.

In the case of a sealed heating system it may be necessary to re-pressurise the system after bleeding a radiator.

Smoke alarms / Carbon Monoxide detectors
The smoke alarms fitted in your home should be mains operated. You should check smoke alarms once a week by pressing the test button. Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors should be kept clean by the occasional use of a vacuum cleaner.

Overflows and warning pipes
If you notice water dripping or flowing from an overflow or warning pipe you should identify the cause straight away. It may indicate that a float operated valve on a storage cistern or WC cistern, or that an unvented hot water storage system requires attention.
Unvented hot water storage systems

These systems should be serviced and maintained only by a Registered Gas Installer (RGI) in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations. (Installer details should be affixed to the box or refer to Emergency and useful numbers section at the back of this book).

Re-pressurising a sealed central heating system

Some central heating systems have a small header tank usually located in the loft space. These systems do not require re-pressurising. Other systems are ‘sealed’ – they don’t have a header tank but do have a pressure vessel either inside the boiler or close to it. There will be a pressure gauge normally on or close to the boiler. If the pressure gauge indicates that the pressure of the system has dropped, it is necessary for the system to be re-pressurised. The instructions for the boiler should indicate the correct pressure for the system and give instructions on how to re-pressurise it. A filling loop is usually provided close to the boiler for this purpose. To re-pressurise the system attach the filling loop between the valves on the heating system and the mains water valve. Gently open the mains water valve carefully watching the needle on the pressure gauge. Leave the mains water valve in the open position until the correct pressure is registered on the gauge. If you over pressurise the system excess pressure can be relieved using the pressure relief valve. Once you have finished remove the filling loop.

Danfoss Heat Exchanger Unit

Further information on the Danfoss Heat Exchanger Unit (HEU) can be found in Section 4 (Heating & Hot Water) and Section 6 (Water).

Alterations and extensions to your home

For structural alterations and extensions – you should seek advice from a professional structural engineer, building surveyor or architect. If you are planning alterations that may affect the structure of your home or the sound proofing of separating walls and floors, including additional thermal insulation to the external walls, you should also contact your Owners Management Company and the Planning Department in your Local Authority. Any alterations or extensions to your home will not be covered by Cosgrave Developments or HomeBond neither will any damage to your home caused by the work undertaken.
Your loft / attic space

- Structural roof timbers are necessary for the support of the roof and should not be cut or removed.
- Attic spaces are not generally intended to be used as a storage space. The structure of the roof is not likely to have been designed to support the additional load of stored items and the loft insulation may prevent safe access.
- Ventilation is provided to control condensation. If vents have been provided in the eaves they should not be blocked or covered over.

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off rafters onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty does not cover such injury or damage. Cosgrave Developments inspect the attic before your closing of sale to confirm insulation is correct.

On the 3 storey home, the attic access hatch is a fire door. Do not alter without professional advice.
Overflows and warning pipes

If you notice water dripping or flowing from an overflow or warning pipe you should identify the cause right away. It may indicate that a float operated valve on a storage cistern or WC cistern, or that an unvented hot water storage system requires attention.

Floor fixings

- Boarded Floors
  
  You can use ordinary wood screws to fix into a floor that is boarded. You should make sure that the screw does not penetrate through the underside of the board to avoid damaging pipes or cables located in the floor.

- Separating ‘Party’ Floors
  
  Floors used to separate apartments and maisonettes reduce the passage of sound and may be designed so that the top layer ‘floats’.
  
  Please note that it is essential that any fixings do not prevent this by connecting the floating layer to the structural floor.

Before fixing to walls, floors and ceilings, always check for buried cables and pipes using a detector available from DIY and hardware stores.

NB. When a system that generates electricity e.g. wind turbines, solar photovoltaic (PV) or combined heat and power (CHP) units, the system, associated components and wiring MAY REMAIN LIVE even when the main switch on the consumer unit is turned off.

PARTICULAR CARE SHOULD BE TAKEN.

Photovoltaic Solar Energy

Photovoltaic solar energy substitute’s electricity that would otherwise have been imported from the grid as today over 60% of the energy used to produce electricity is wasted due to generation and grid transmission losses.

Electricity is also a major contributor to Ireland’s greenhouse gas emissions (20% of total) due to the combined effect of low power plants efficiency and use of dirty fuels like coal and peat. With the new micro generation export tariff now is the best time to install a PV system.
Solar panels

PV cells transform sunlight, a free and inexhaustible energy source, directly into electricity. Photovoltaic Solar Panels are part of the family of sustainable energy technologies described as "micro-generation" whereby the electricity is produced on site using a renewable source of energy, saving the "lost energy" from generation point to end user. If you've ever seen a solar calculator, you've seen PV in action.

PV is distinct from other kinds of solar energy in that it harnesses the sun's light rather than its heat. It provides an on-site renewable power generation solution for almost any application.

Renewable energy

Any renewable technologies installed in your home should be serviced and maintained only by a competent person in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

Cabinets

- **Cleaning**
  
  Products such as lemon oil or polishes that include scratch cover are suggested for wood cabinet care. Follow the manufacturer’s directions. Use such products no more than every three to six months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water as both will damage the lustre of the finish.

- **Hinges**
  
  If hinges catch or drawer glides become sluggish, a small amount of silicone lubricant will improve their performance.

- **Moisture**
  
  Damage to cabinet surfaces and warping can result from operating appliances that generate large amounts of moisture too close to the cabinets. When operating such appliances place them in a location that is not directly under a cabinet.

- **Wood grain**
  
  Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and colour are normal in all wood or wood veneer selections. Replacements are not made due to such variations.

**Cosgrave Developments Warranty Guidelines**

*During the inspection we will confirm that all cabinet parts are installed and that the cabinet surfaces are in an acceptable condition.*
**Internal walls**

Internal walls can be built of blocks, from timber frames or using proprietary partition panels. Blockwork walls can be finished with plaster or plasterboard dry-lining. Timber framed walls and proprietary partition panels are finished with plasterboard. Some internal walls are load-bearing, so do not remove them, or make substantial alterations to them, without first seeking professional advice.

**Doors and locks**

The doors installed in your home are wood products subject to such natural characteristics of wood as shrinkage and warping. Due to the natural fluctuation of humidity and the use of central heating, showers and dishwashers, interior doors may occasionally require minor adjustments.

- **Folding doors**
  Interior folding doors sometimes stick or warp due to weather conditions. Apply a silicone lubricant to the tracks to minimise this inconvenience.

- **Exterior finish**
  To ensure longer life for your exterior wood doors, varnish them once a year. Stained exterior doors with clear finishes tend to weather faster than painted doors. Treat the finish with a wood preservative every three months to preserve the varnish and prevent the door from drying and cracking. Reseal stained exterior doors whenever the finish begins cracking.

- **Failure to latch**
  If a door will not latch because of minor settling, you can correct this by making a new opening in the jamb for the latch plate (re-mortising) and raising or lowering the plate accordingly.

- **Hinges**
  You can remedy a squeaky door hinge by removing the hinge pin and applying a silicone lubricant to it. Avoid using oil, as it can gum-up or attract dirt. Graphite works well as a lubricant but can create a grey smudge on the door or floor covering beneath the hinge if too much is applied.

- **Keys**
  Keep a duplicate privacy lock key where children can’t reach it in the event a youngster locks him or herself in a room. The top edge of the door casing is often used as a place to keep the key. A small screwdriver or similarly shaped device can open some types of privacy locks.

- **Locks**
  Lubricate door locks with graphite or other waterproof lubricant. Avoid oil as it will gum up.
• **Slamming**
  Slamming doors can damage both doors and jambs and can even cause cracking in walls. Teach children not to hang on the doorknob and swing back and forth, this will work loose and cause the door to sag.

• **Shrinkage**
  The most common cause of a sticking door is the natural expansion of wood due to changes in humidity. When sticking is due to swelling during a damp season do not plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes. Before planning a ‘sticking’ door, try two other steps. First, apply either a paste wax, light coat of paraffin, or candle wax to the sticking surface or tighten the screws that hold the doorjamb or doorframe. If planning is necessary even after these measures, use sand paper to smooth the door and paint the sanded area to seal against moisture.

• **Warping**
  If a door warps slightly, keeping it closed as much as possible often returns it to normal.

• **Weather stripping**
  Weather stripping and exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement.

• **Adjustments**
  Due to normal settling of the home the doors may require adjustment for a proper fit. This is your home maintenance responsibility.

• **Panel shrinkage**
  Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility.

*Cosgrave Developments Warranty Guidelines*
*During the inspection we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted.*
Plasterboard

Slight cracking or seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. These are caused by the shrinkage of the wood and normal deflection of rafters to which the plasterboard is attached.

- Repairs
  
The care of plasterboard is your maintenance responsibility. Most plasterboard repairs can be easily made. This work is best done at the time of decoration. Hairline cracks can be repaired with a coat of paint. You can repair slightly larger cracks with polyfilla or caulk.

Cosgrave Developments Warranty Guidelines

During the inspection we confirm that plasterboard surfaces are in acceptable condition.

- **Lighting conditions:**
  
  Cosgrave Developments does not repair plasterboard flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.

- **Related warranty repairs:**
  
  If a plasterboard repair is needed as a result of poor workmanship (such as blisters in tape) or other warranty based repair (such as a plumbing leak), Cosgrave Developments will complete the repair by touching up the repaired area with the same paint that was on the surface when the home was handed over. If more than one third of the wall is involved, Cosgrave Developments will repaint the wall, corner to corner. You are responsible for custom paint colours or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to the hand over. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-up may not match the surrounding area.

Hardwood floors

Daily care of hardwood floors, preventative maintenance is the primary goal.

- **Cleaning**
  
  Sweep on a daily basis or as needed. Never wet mop a hardwood floor. Excessive water causes wood to expand and can possibly damage the floor. When damp mopping, remove all excess water from the mop. Check with the builder to see if the floor has a water-based finish.

- **Dimples**
  
  Placing heavy furniture or dropping heavy or sharp objects on hardwood floors can result in dimples.

- **Filmy appearance**
  
  A white, filmy appearance can result from moisture, often from wet shoes and boots.

- **Furniture legs**
  
  Install proper floor protectors on furniture placed on hardwood floors. Protectors will allow chairs to move easily over the floor without scuffing. Regularly clean the protectors to remove any grit that may have accumulated.
- **Humidity**
  Wood floors respond noticeably to changes in humidity in your home. Especially during winter months the individual planks or pieces expand and contract as water content changes. A humidifier helps but does not eliminate this reaction.

- **Mats and area rugs**
  Use protective mats at the exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit getting onto the floor. Gritty sand is wood flooring’s worst enemy. However, be aware that rubber backing on area rugs or mats can cause yellowing and warping of the floor surface.

- **Separation**
  Expect some shrinkage around heat vents or any heat-producing appliances, or during seasonal weather changes. (See warping).

- **Shoes**
  Keep high heels in good repair. Heels that have lost their protective cap (thus exposing the fastening nail) will exert over 8,000 pounds of pressure per square inch on the floor. That’s enough to damage hardened concrete; it will mark your wooden floor.

- **Spills**
  Clean up food spills with a dry cloth.

- **Splinters**
  When floors are new, small splinters of wood can appear.

- **Sun exposure**
  Exposure to direct sunlight can cause irreparable damage to hardwood floors. To preserve the beauty of your hardwood floors, install and use window coverings in these areas.

- **Traffic paths**
  A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely.

- **Warping**
  Warping will occur if the floor repeatedly becomes wet or is thoroughly soaked even once. Slight warping in the area of heat-vents or heat-producing appliances is also typical.

- **Wax**
  Waxing and the use of products such as oil soap are neither necessary nor recommended. Once you wax a polyurethane finish floor, recoating is difficult because the new finish will not bond to the wax. The preferred maintenance is preventive cleaning and recoating annually or as needed, to maintain the desired lustre.

- **Separating ‘party’ floors**
  Floors used to separate flats and apartments reduce the passage of sound and may be designed so that the top layer ‘floats’. It is essential that any fixings do not prevent this by connecting the floating layer to the structural floor.
Floor sound insulation (Apartments)

Please note that floor sound insulation material has been fitted to all apartment floors at Cosgrave Developments, above ground level.

The products currently used are as follows;

1. Boomerang: General areas excluding bathrooms and kitchens.
2. Silent-Pro: Kitchen and bathroom areas.

All floor surfaces have been covered including under baths, sanitary ware, door saddles, kitchen and bathroom units and wardrobes.

The purpose of these products is to reduce impact sound transmission. Current building regulations specify a weighted impact sound improvement index of 17 decibels as in annex A to BS 5821 part 2 1984. This regulation specifies that products be bonded to the floor. Both products are stuck.

* Subject to change without notice

N.B. Under no circumstances should these products be uplifted as they form part of the insulation system!

Before installing floor covering materials such as solid, semi-solid, laminated timber flooring products or ceramic tiles, it is incumbent on the owner to ascertain whether the flooring product being used is compatible with the sound insulation, and complies with Building Regulations 1997 T.G.D.E., sound.

Before fixing to floors or ceilings always check for buried pipes and cables using a detector.

Separating (‘party’) walls

Walls used to separate semi-detached, terraced houses or apartments are designed to reduce the passage of sound and provide a fire barrier. In masonry construction, separating walls may be built from bricks or blocks with solid or cavity construction and finished with plaster or plasterboard. In timber framed homes, the separating wall is also timber framed. It may be finished with extra layers of plasterboard and incorporate sound absorbent material. Whichever method is used, you should not reduce the thickness of the wall or make holes in the plasterboard lining, for example, to install an extra power point or recess a bookshelf. This may reduce its sound insulation and fire resistance.
Insulation

The effectiveness of insulation is diminished if it is uneven. As the last step in any work carried out in your attic (for example, the installation of a T.V. antenna) you should confirm that the insulation lays smooth and even. Do not step on drywall ceilings, because this can result in personal injury or damage to the plasterboard. Electrical outlets normally emit noticeable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low.

Cosgrave Developments Warranty Guidelines

Cosgrave Developments will install insulation to meet or exceed the building codes applicable at the time of construction.

HRV filters and vents

The HRV filters need to be checked at three (3) month intervals and the vents should be cleaned regularly with a vacuum cleaner. For information on cleaning the vents, please view the online tutorial at https://youtu.be/HZ6REXWsB-A

For further information on Vent-Axia, please visit https://www.vent-axia.com
Windows

Windows require minimal care. Generally the windows in your home can be cleaned from the inside and are the responsibility of the owner/occupier. Fixed panes can be reached from adjacent opening panes. Please follow the manufacturer’s instructions.

• Take every precaution when cleaning.
• Use warm water with mild detergent.

DO NOT...

• Stand on loose furnishings.
• Use ladders without first ensuring the safety of the operative.
• Use abrasive cleaners, blades etc. as these will damage the glass and surrounds.

Glass / glazing

Guidelines from standard industry Codes of Practice recommend that should you note a problem with your windows that you keep the following in mind.

• Both panes of the sealed unit shall be viewed at right angles to the glass from the room side standing at a distance of not less than two metres in natural and not direct sunlight.
• For units incorporating toughened, laminated or coated glass the viewing distance shall not be less than three metres.
• The area to be viewed is the normal vision area with the exception of a 50mm wide band around the perimeter of the unit.
• Flat transparent glass including laminated and toughened glass shall be deemed acceptable if the following phenomena are neither obtrusive nor bunched; seeds, bubbles or blisters, hair lines or blobs, fine scratches of not more than 25mm in length, minute embedded particles.
• Obtrusiveness of blemishes shall be judged by looking through the glass, not at it, under lighting conditions as described above.
**Kitchen Care**

- **Accessories & taps**
  - Clean with warm water, mild soap or cream cleaner and dry promptly.
  - Brass or chrome taps may require occasional polishing with a small amount of Brasso or similar product.
  - Avoid the use of polishes or concentrated cleaning agents on ‘antique’ finish taps as this may destroy the antique effect.

- **Sink accessories**
  - Avoid contact with hot pans.
  - Avoid prolonged contact with bleach.

- **Kitchen and fitted accessories**
  - Do NOT allow prolonged with water or liquid foodstuffs and NO contact with oily substances.
  - Wipe up any dirt or spillage immediately.
  - Metal Extractor Filters can be washed in a dishwasher. Paper, Carbon or Foam Filters should be replaced every six – twelve months.
  - Treat any stainless-steel accessories with warm water and a mild soapy solution and dry off afterwards.

- **Stainless Steel and Granite Sinks**
  - After use wipe over the surface with a soft damp cloth removing surface water and any particles of food, debris etc. Depending on the level of use, the sink will respond to a weekly clean with a cream cleaner.
  - Bleach should be avoided in high strength and for prolonged contact.
  - Never leave cloths to soak in a bowl overnight in a concentrated solution of bleach. This may lead to severe pitting (holes) on the stainless steel surface which in extreme cases will cause the bowl to leak.

*Do NOT use wire wool, bleach, scouring pads/powders or silver dip cleaners in your sink.*
Bathroom Care

- **Wall Tiles**
  - Wipe down wall tiles regularly with a moist microfibre cloth. An all-purpose cleaner can be used in the case of more stubborn dirt.

- **Floor Tiles**
  - Regular vacuuming or wiping prevents the accumulation of dust and dirt. In the case of more stubborn dirt, the floor can be wet cleaned using a microfibre mop.

- **Porcelain Stoneware**
  - An all-purpose bathroom cleaner can be used to clean Wash Hand Basins and WC’s and shower trays.
  - Avoid prolonged contact with bleach.

- **Accessories & taps**
  - Clean with warm water, mild soap or cream cleaner and dry promptly.
  - Brass or chrome taps may require occasional polishing with a small amount of Brasso or similar product.

Your bathroom products are covered by the Ideal Standard Guarantee – details can be found on the following page.
Ideal Standard

Guarantee:
Our confidence in the quality and reliability of Ideal Standard products enables us to guarantee many of our items for a lifetime.

Our guarantee is offered on all products that have been used in the manner for which they were intended, and does not apply to any products that have been misused or abused in any way. Products must be installed and cared for in line with our fixing instructions and local water bye-laws. In the unlikely event that the product fails within the guarantee period, we do offer a free replacement or replacement part (or nearest equivalent) once proof of purchase can be provided. Liability is limited to individual products and does not cover consequential loss or damage on installation.

1. All ceramic products are guaranteed for a lifetime.
2. Idealcast and Idealform acrylic baths are guaranteed for 25 years from date of purchase.
3. Whirlpool and Airspa baths, showers, bath panels, furniture, mixers and taps, WC suite seats and cistern fittings are guaranteed for five years from date of purchase and require proof of purchase (Cistern and shower door seals are not included).
4. Shower enclosures, wetroom panels and bath screens are guaranteed for ten years and shower trays for 25 years.
5. Parts (including push button flush valves and blower power packs on whirlpools baths) are guaranteed for five years and will be replaced if found to be faulty.
6. Cistern diaphragms, seals and shower seals are not included. Replacements must be purchased through a supplying merchant.
7. When your bathroom has been satisfactorily installed and is working well, please ensure you register your guarantee.
8. The guarantee is transferable “it applies to the product not the purchaser” provided guarantee registration details are passed on to the new owner.

Conditions:
1. This guarantee applies only to product purchased and installed in the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland.
2. Proof of purchase is required in the event of a claim.
3. Provision of the barcode/serial number will be required to enable product identification.
4. We must be given the opportunity to inspect the product, if we request to do so. The product should not be removed or destroyed before inspection without our consent. We may request photographic evidence in any investigation.
5. The product must have been installed used and cared for in accordance with our instructions for installation and care. In addition, the products must have been installed in accordance with good plumbing practice.
6. Where our on-site investigation reveals that the reported fault was not due to manufacturing or material defects a call out charge will be applied.
7. Where we are satisfied that a defect has arisen because of faulty manufacturing or materials we will, at our option, repair or replace the product free of charge to you. If we choose to replace the product and we no longer manufacture the identical model we will replace it with the nearest equivalent in our then current range.
8. This guarantee does not apply to general wear and tear or where, in our opinion, the product has been modified, misused, neglected or willfully or accidentally damaged.
9. This guarantee does not cover consequential damage or loss.
10. This guarantee does not cover damage and/or malfunction caused by inappropriate cleaning (please refer to our recommended care and maintenance guidelines).
11. Mildew build up, the effects of lime scale and corrosion are not covered under this guarantee.
12. Glass breakage and any consequential damage. (All glass used conforms to EN12150-1 where applicable). Breakage of glass is not covered by the guarantee as glass by its very nature can shatter.

13. Warranty is not transferable in cases where product is reinstalled in subsequent locations.

14. Idealclean glass coating is covered by a one-year guarantee. (Subject to appropriate maintenance and cleaning).

15. Non-glass or metallic spare parts (e.g. seals and bearings) are subject to normal wear and tear through usage and are therefore covered on all products for two years from installation, these parts will be chargeable thereafter. Thereafter, such parts are available for purchase through a supplying merchant.

This guarantee does not affect your statutory rights.

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