



SNAGS OR DEFECTS OR NEITHER?

Following the publication of the **New Homes Quality Code**, it's important that you understand the distinction.





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We have always applied a simple definition.

Something that is wrong prior to legal completion is a snag and something that becomes wrong after legal completion is a defect.

There's a reason we make the distinction. We have always believed that a property should be near 'snag-free' when the purchaser moves in. Sadly, there has been an alarming trend in the last 10 years for an ever-growing incidence of snags, which makes for an unhappy homeowner from day 1.

We have noticed that a happy owner at the outset tends to be far less difficult to manage over the ensuing 2 years, than one who starts with problems due to unresolved snags.

Now, The New Homes Quality Board have set out their approach to snags in the new Quality Code. They apply the definition a 'Complete New Home'. A property cannot legally complete if it is not a Complete New Home and one of the characteristics is that it should be completely finished and fit for purpose with little or nothing outstanding. A small consideration may be made for a few minor decorative items, but that is it.

One of our site services is providing a Quality Assurance Inspection – this is not to be confused with a Build Snag – the contractors have that responsibility and once completed, there should be relatively few overlooked snag items to find. Our service comes in after theirs and hovers up the final few things.

It is important to plan the stages of final activity leading to legal completion to give yourself sufficient time. Here's our take on what needs to be considered:

- Your contractor conducts their Build Snag, addresses outstanding items, and then declares practical completion
- You must organise a Quality Assurance Inspection to pick up any overlooked snags (a service we provide)
- Allow sufficient time for your contractors to address items reported
- You must allow your purchaser time to conduct (or instruct someone to conduct) a pre-completion inspection. They must use the Template Checklist provided by NHQB and this must be carried out before completion and from 5 calendar days (earlier by mutual agreement) after the Notice to Complete has been served.
- Finally, again before legal completion takes place, you must arrange for a Home Demonstration with the purchaser (again this is a service we can provide).

There's much to fit in between practical and legal completion, so it's important you plan to give yourself sufficient time. Missing out any of these steps will cause problems later and be in breach of the code and it isn't in anyone's interests to start with a complaint.