

CUSTOMER CARE HANDBOOK

Looking after your garden and its installations

Practical guidance for lawns, planting, paving, decking, fences, water features and garden equipment.

We design, build and maintain outdoor spaces with thoughtful design, skilled craftsmanship and care for people and place. This handbook helps you keep your garden working well as it grows and changes.

Expanded edition 2.0 October 2026

USING YOUR CARE HANDBOOK

A garden changes with the seasons. These notes help you care for the materials and living things we have installed, spot changes early and know when to ask for help.

Start with your own handover

Use the sections that match your project. Your handover should identify the installed products, finishes, planting and equipment, with any curing periods, loading limits and manufacturer instructions. If a general suggestion here conflicts with those instructions, pause and ask us which method applies.

Care that reflects our values

We want your outdoor space to remain useful and welcoming for years to come. Begin with regular observation, gentle cleaning and targeted care. Use water thoughtfully, protect soil and wildlife, and avoid unnecessary chemicals. We will explain what is known, what needs checking and the next practical step.

Keep the project information together

Retain your specification, planting plan, invoices, handover photographs and any product manuals or guarantee documents. Record dates of cleaning, feeding, equipment servicing and reported problems. The record at the back of this handbook gives you a place to start.

Changes need a fresh check

Ask before adding heavy planters, a hot tub, a roof, a swing or an enclosed screen. New loads, wind resistance, drainage changes or fixings can affect an existing installation. Do not drill, alter supports or cover ventilation routes without advice.

Getting support

Email info@fbslandscapes.co.uk or call 0121 339 5070 with your name, project address, a short description and photographs. We will help identify the relevant care guidance. This handbook does not introduce a new guarantee or alter the terms agreed for your project.

FINDING THE RIGHT SECTION

Keep this handbook with your project handover. Page numbers refer to this edition.

Your garden care index

Topic	Page
The first few weeks	4
New lawns and established lawns	5-6
Borders containers trees and hedges	7-8
Porcelain stone and block paving	9-10
Suspended paving	11
Composite decking	12-13
Timber decking	14
Fences gates and screens	15-16
Structures raised beds and walls	17
Drainage and surface alternatives	18-19
Ponds and water features	20
Irrigation	21
Lighting and powered equipment	22
Seasonal care plan	23
Reporting a concern	24
Your handover record	25
Further guidance	26

When you are away

Leave a watering and access plan with whoever is caring for the garden. New turf, containers and recently planted trees may need attention even when established plants do not.

THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

Early care protects the work while plants establish and construction materials settle or cure. Your handover sets the specific timescales.

Before normal use

Confirm when you may walk on paving, move furniture onto it, drive over it or use new steps and decking. Mortars, jointing compounds, coatings, concrete and resin systems have different curing requirements. Weather can alter those periods; a dry-looking surface is not proof that it is ready for full use.

Make watering manageable

Check new turf and planted areas regularly, especially in drying wind or warm weather. Water where it is needed and check that moisture reaches the roots rather than running away. Ask for a practical plan if you cannot provide the agreed establishment care, including during a holiday.

Protect the finished surfaces

Lift furniture instead of dragging it. Fit suitable non-marking feet and keep work tools, cement, paint and potting materials off finished surfaces. Protect against spills without trapping damp beneath unsuitable covers. Keep construction dust away from ponds and drains.

Watch without making adjustments

Photograph a concern before changing anything. Do not alter rail supports, deck clips, gate hinges, irrigation settings you do not understand or electrical components. Keep children and pets away from curing materials and temporary access restrictions.

Early changes to discuss

Report lifting turf, persistent wilting, rocking paving, unexpected standing water, loose fixings or a gate that catches. Some colour variation and timber movement are natural, but we should assess a change that affects use or stability. Contact us rather than waiting for the problem to worsen.

HELPING A NEW LAWN ESTABLISH

New turf and seed need moisture, light and time. Establishment depends on the season, soil and weather, so use condition checks rather than a fixed calendar alone.

Water the root zone

During dry weather, check that moisture is reaching the soil beneath the turf. Water gently and evenly, paying attention to edges and areas beside paving. Avoid repeated shallow wetting or leaving the lawn saturated. Seedbeds need gentle watering so seed is not washed into hollows. Follow the water-use rules that apply locally.

Limit traffic

Keep people, pets, play equipment and garden furniture off until the lawn is established enough for the intended use. Repeated walking can damage soft ground and disturb roots. Use any access route agreed at handover; do not cover the grass with sheets or boards for long periods.

The first cut

Follow the first-cut advice in your handover. For turf, wait until it has rooted securely, use a sharp blade on a high setting and avoid a heavy mower on soft soil. Cut modestly and gradually lower the height as the lawn strengthens. Seeded lawns need their own first-cut timing; ask if unsure.

What to watch for

Drying seams, shrinking edges, persistent yellow patches or turf that lifts easily need prompt attention. Check watering coverage and tell us what you find. Do not add fertiliser, weedkiller or intensive scarification to a struggling new lawn without advice.

A useful record

Note the installation date, weather, watering pattern and first mow. Send an overall photograph plus a close view of affected areas if growth is uneven. These details help us distinguish establishment problems from shade, wear or drainage issues.

KEEPING AN ESTABLISHED LAWN HEALTHY

A useful lawn does not need to look identical throughout the year. Adjust care to growth and use, and keep intensive treatments for a clear purpose.

Mow to the conditions

Mow little and often while the grass is growing, with sharp blades. Avoid removing a large amount in one cut. Raise the height during hot or dry weather and avoid scalping uneven ground. Postpone mowing if the surface is frozen, saturated or too soft to support the mower without damage.

Work with the seasons

Review feeding, aeration and overseeding against the lawn's condition rather than applying every treatment routinely. Compacted paths, thin shady areas and bare patches may need different remedies. Do not use spring feed as a substitute for an appropriate autumn treatment; follow the selected product's label and agreed care plan.

Water thoughtfully

Established lawns can turn brown in dry weather and often recover when conditions improve. Prioritise establishment watering for new plants and lawns. If watering an established area is necessary, assess the soil and coverage and comply with local restrictions.

Reduce avoidable wear

Move small play items and furniture regularly, collect leaf piles and vary well-used routes. Avoid parking equipment on the grass. Dog urine, shade and frequent traffic can affect appearance; tell us where the damage occurs before deciding on a repair.

When to seek advice

Report waterlogging that persists, rapid unexplained dieback, recurring unevenness or patches that do not recover. A photograph, the time the change began and recent treatments help. We can discuss a suitable maintenance routine rather than applying chemicals without a diagnosis.

CARING FOR BORDERS AND CONTAINERS

Planting is a living part of your garden. Rooting conditions and species matter more than a single watering or pruning rule.

Check soil before watering

Check the rootball and surrounding soil, not only the mulch surface. Water slowly so it soaks into the root zone. Plants beside walls, beneath trees or under eaves may miss rainfall. Containers dry differently from beds and can need more frequent checks; ensure their drainage holes remain open.

Keep the soil covered

Remove competing weeds carefully and replenish the mulch specified for your garden. Keep mulch away from stems, trunks and plant crowns. Do not bury plants more deeply as you top up a bed. Avoid cultivating close to roots or walking repeatedly over planted soil.

Prune by plant and purpose

Use the planting plan to identify each plant and its flowering or pruning needs. A general winter cut-back is unsuitable for every species. Keep some suitable seedheads and shelter where they support wildlife, while removing diseased material with advice. Ask before cutting unfamiliar shrubs hard.

Feeding and winter care

Use feed only where needed and appropriate to the plant, soil and season. Follow product rates rather than assuming more is better. Tender plants and dahlias need a site-specific winter plan: lifting, protection or leaving in place depends on drainage and exposure. Mulch does not guarantee frost protection.

Report changes early

Tell us about persistent wilting, rotting stems or sudden dieback. Include plant name if known, photos and whether the soil feels wet or dry. Check for damage before assuming pests are the cause; avoid broad pesticide use that may harm beneficial wildlife.

ESTABLISHING TREES AND HEDGES

New trees and hedges can need support through more than one growing season. Large plants and dry sites often need a longer establishment plan.

Watering needs attention

Check the rootball during dry spells and water slowly enough to soak in. A heavy shower may not reach roots in a rain shadow. Keep irrigation arrangements available while plants establish; adjust to soil conditions rather than leaving a timer unchanged all year.

Keep the base clear

Reduce competing grass and weeds around new planting. Maintain suitable mulch without piling it against trunks or covering the root flare. Avoid strimmer damage and do not heap compost, gravel or soil against stems. Keep access to any watering points.

Supports and ties

Inspect ties for rubbing or constriction and supports for movement. Let us know if a tree leans or the rootball shifts. Ask when a stake or support should be adjusted or removed; leaving ties too tight can damage a growing trunk. Do not pull a tree upright without assessing the roots.

Hedge trimming

Follow the hedge's species-specific plan and use sharp tools. Do not assume all evergreens tolerate cutting back to bare wood. Check for wildlife before starting; leave occupied nests and nesting areas undisturbed. Keep an informal native hedge's flowers and berries in mind when planning the work.

What to report

Persistent wilting, dead shoots spreading through a hedge, damaged bark, loose supports or sudden leaning deserve advice. Establishment watering is still needed for ready-grown hedge sections. Keep the supplied species, sizes and planting date in your handover record.

CARING FOR PORCELAIN PAVING

Porcelain is straightforward to keep clean, but the joints, edges and supporting installation need care too.

A regular light clean

Sweep away grit and leaf debris with a suitable brush. Wash small spills promptly using water and a cleaner approved for the paving. Test an unfamiliar cleaner in a discreet area first, rinse as directed and prevent dirty runoff reaching ponds or planted beds.

Joints are a separate material

The jointing product may have different chemical and pressure-washing limits from the slab. Follow both sets of instructions. Do not blast close to joints, scrape them out or add new grout over an unidentified product. Report open joints or repeated loss of jointing material.

Furniture and everyday use

Use suitable feet under furniture and lift heavy objects rather than dragging them. Keep steel tools and rusty pot stands off the surface. Porcelain does not mean every stain will disappear or that the surface is non-slip in all conditions; clear algae, wet leaves and spills promptly.

Frost and deeper cleaning

Ask before using acids, aggressive cleaners, abrasive pads, de-icing salts or a sealer. Some porcelain needs no sealer, while joints and other materials beside it may react differently. Clear snow with a suitable non-damaging tool and follow the product guidance for ice.

Movement and drainage

Report rocking slabs, chipped edges, changes at steps or water pooling where it previously drained. Do not try to lift or repair a slab until the installed system is identified. Suspended porcelain needs the separate guidance on page 11.

STONE CONCRETE AND BLOCK PAVING

Natural stone, concrete, block paving and their joints respond differently to cleaning. Identify the surface before choosing a treatment.

Start gently

Sweep loose material and remove spills promptly. Use a cleaner suitable for the stone or concrete, test discreetly and follow the dilution and rinsing instructions. Avoid acid cleaning unless a competent specialist confirms suitability; some stones can be permanently damaged.

Colour and surface changes

Natural stone has variation; concrete can develop pale deposits, and organic staining may appear beneath trees or pots. A change in appearance does not by itself identify a fault. Photograph it and ask before attempting an aggressive treatment or sealing it in.

Protect the joints

High-pressure cleaning can remove sand or damage mortar and jointing. After a permitted clean, the correct jointing material may need reinstating. Permeable paving needs the specified open-graded joint material; ordinary sand or a surface sealer can interfere with its intended drainage.

Use it for its intended load

Only use a patio or drive for the vehicle/loading category confirmed at handover. Protect paving from skips, stabilisers and building materials using an agreed method. Do not park on unfinished or curing areas, or allow oil and cement to remain on the surface.

Ask before repairs

Contact us about recurring settlement, rocking, widening joints, failed edges or drainage changes. Repeated weed growth may need care of the joint rather than repeated chemical spraying. Keep the stone or block name and jointing product in your record so a repair uses compatible materials.

LOOKING AFTER SUSPENDED PAVING

A raised paving surface relies on its slabs, rails, pedestals and restraints working together. Preserve the access, drainage and ventilation details in your handover.

Keep designed gaps open

Clear leaves and loose debris from the surface and accessible drainage openings. Do not fill the joints, edge clearances or gaps beside walls with sand, mortar, sealant or soil. Keep air bricks and other building ventilation routes unobstructed.

Cleaning and access

Clean slabs using the guidance for their material. Avoid directing a jet into joints, cavities or thresholds. Only access inspection points in the way demonstrated at handover. Do not lift slabs, remove restraints or adjust pedestals and rails yourself; these components can affect adjacent areas.

Loads and changes

Check before placing large planters, water-filled containers, hot tubs, fire pits or structures on the paving. Point loads may differ from ordinary foot traffic. A slab's appearance does not establish the capacity of the system beneath it. Retain the recorded project loading limits.

Water and the building

A level threshold does not mean paving is attached to the building. Preserve the agreed waterproofing interfaces and drainage falls. Tell us if water tracks towards a doorway, an outlet blocks or moisture appears inside; do not seal a gap as a guessed remedy.

Movement needs assessment

If a slab rocks, a corner settles, an edge lifts or a support appears damaged, stop using the affected area and keep others away. Send photos of the location and the change without dismantling it. We can arrange the appropriate inspection before normal use resumes.

CLEANING COMPOSITE DECKING

Composite decking needs less routine finishing than many timber decks, but it still needs cleaning. Capped and uncapped boards can have different care rules.

Identify your exact board

Keep the manufacturer, range, colour and care sheet from your handover. A treatment allowed on one composite range may damage another. Begin with the manufacturer's ordinary cleaning method and ask us before sanding, painting, oiling or sealing.

A simple cleaning sequence

Sweep loose grit and leaves. Clear debris from accessible board gaps without forcing or widening them. Clean a small area with the approved mild solution and a suitable non-metal brush, working with the board direction. Rinse so cleaner and dirt do not dry on the surface. Keep runoff out of planted areas and ponds.

Spills and marks

Blot food, oil and drink spills promptly rather than rubbing grit across the board. Use only a product approved for that stain and board range, and test it in a discreet area. Avoid bleach, solvents, abrasive pads or stain removers chosen only because they worked elsewhere. Do not sand a capped finish.

Pressure washing

Do not assume a pressure washer is safe for every board. If the exact manufacturer permits it, follow the stated pressure, nozzle, distance and direction. Never use a rotary dirt-blaster or concentrate on an edge, joint or fixing. If the care sheet is missing, use gentle hand cleaning and contact us.

How often

Inspect and sweep regularly, more often under trees or in shade. Plan deeper cleaning when deposits appear and at seasonal checks. Clear algae promptly because any outdoor deck can become slippery when wet or dirty.

PROTECTING COMPOSITE DECKING

Everyday habits protect the boards and the framework. Keep the designed gaps and ventilation working.

Heat and hot objects

Check surface temperature before children or pets use the deck in strong sun. Never set a disposable barbecue, hot pan, embers or ash directly on the boards. A mat does not automatically make a fire pit or barbecue suitable; confirm product clearances and the installation's loading requirements first.

Furniture and planters

Fit suitable non-marking feet, lift furniture and avoid dragging sharp objects. Choose mats and covers approved for the board because some trap moisture or mark the finish. Keep access around planters for cleaning and drainage. Ask before introducing a concentrated heavy load.

Expansion and the supporting system

Board gaps accommodate the installed system's movement and drainage. Do not pack them with filler or alter the clips to reduce a gap. Preserve ventilation below the deck, and keep stored items and leaf piles from blocking it. The surface boards are not a substitute for structural supports.

Seasonal inspection

Look for lifting boards, loose trims, damaged handrails, unexpected movement or blocked outlets, especially after storms. Normal product weathering should be judged against the exact range. If a board bows, a joint becomes a trip hazard or a railing moves, stop using that area and tell us.

A repair is product specific

Send the board details and photos before attempting to conceal a scratch or replace a board. We can check the permitted repair method and compatible parts. Keep any spare boards stored as instructed; replacement colour may differ from material that has weathered outdoors.

CARING FOR TIMBER DECKING

Timber responds to weather and moisture. Regular clearing and careful use help the deck dry and keep it comfortable underfoot.

Clear and clean

Remove leaves and dirt before they hold moisture against the boards. Use the cleaning method suited to the species and coating. Start gently, rinse as directed and allow the deck to dry. High pressure can roughen fibres or damage a finish; only use it within the specified limits.

Finishes and weathering

Check whether your timber needs an oil, stain or other finish, and when the first application is appropriate. Use a compatible product over the existing coating. Do not apply to dirty, damp or unsuitable timber, and follow the weather conditions and drying period on the label. A finish does not repair a structural problem.

Inspect the details

Check boards, step edges, railings and accessible fixings for damage. Splits and colour change can be natural, but excessive movement, sharp splinters, decay or loose rails need assessment. Do not tighten or replace unfamiliar fixings in a way that changes the installation.

Keep it ventilated

Leave board gaps and airflow below the deck open. Do not trap soil, leaf piles or stored items against supports. Ask before enclosing the underside or fixing heavy screens to the deck. Lift furniture, use suitable protective feet and avoid trapping water beneath long-term covers.

Choosing ongoing care

We can help identify the timber and a practical maintenance schedule. Keep product names and coating dates in the handover record. If the deck feels unstable or a support appears damaged, keep people away until it has been assessed.

TIMBER FENCES AND GATES

A seasonal check helps fencing remain sound and gates work smoothly. Timber will change as weather conditions change.

Check after strong winds

Look for leaning posts, loose panels, lifted cappings and movement at fixings. Check from a safe position without pushing a weak panel. Keep people away if a fence could fall, and contact us before a small issue develops into wider damage.

Keep the base clear

Avoid piling soil, compost or stored materials against panels and posts. Control climbers so you can inspect the fence and so their weight does not overload it. Fencing is not automatically designed to retain soil; keep garden levels as agreed.

Cleaning and finishes

Follow the timber treatment and finish instructions. Some treated products need no extra preservative; others have specific coating requirements. Weathering to grey or small drying checks may occur, but do not dismiss large distortion, decay or instability as normal.

A gate that catches

Clear its opening and check for an obvious obstruction. Do not force a gate, plane it down or move its supports as a first response. Seasonal movement, settlement or hinge wear can need different remedies. Use lubrication only on the parts and in the way the hardware supplier specifies.

Avoid added strain

Do not hang heavy items, a hammock or a swing from a fence or gate without checking its capacity. Preserve any access or escape route agreed at handover. Tell us if a latch no longer secures, a hinge pulls away or a post begins moving.

COMPOSITE FENCING AND METALWORK

Composite panels, metal gates and decorative screens need care matched to their material and coating.

Composite panels

Use the exact manufacturer's cleaning instructions. Sweep or gently wash ordinary dirt and rinse appropriately. Do not paint, stain or sand panels unless the range permits it. Leave the designed movement gaps and drainage openings clear; do not pack soil against a panel to close a gap.

Posts caps and trims

Check accessible fixings, caps and edge trims after storms. Do not change the spacing or support system yourself. Do not attach heavy climbers, screens or raised beds to panels without approval. Report leaning posts, lifted boards or loose cappings.

Coated metal and aluminium

Wash with a suitable mild solution and soft cloth or brush, then rinse. Avoid abrasives or chemicals that attack the finish. Remove accumulated dirt around hinges and drainage holes. Report chips, corrosion, staining or damage before selecting a touch-up paint; colour and coating systems must match.

Latches and operation

Keep the opening clear and check smooth operation. Follow the hardware instructions for any lubrication; electrical locks and magnetic locks need their own guidance. Never dismantle a lock or defeat a safety device to make a gate move.

Powered gates are different

Use the separate electrical equipment guidance on page 22. Keep the servicing record and operating manual. A decorative screen, fence or gate is not a safety barrier for a drop or pond unless it was specifically designed and confirmed for that purpose.

STRUCTURES RAISED BEDS AND WALLS

Pergolas, planters, steps and walls have a defined role. Keep that role in mind when caring for them or planning additions.

Pergolas and garden structures

Inspect from ground level for loose fixings, damaged members or movement after severe weather. Keep climbers manageable and drainage details open. Do not add a roof, swing, suspended seat, heavy screening or overhead equipment without a load and wind-resistance check.

Raised beds and planters

Maintain the intended soil level and drainage. Avoid compacting or overfilling soil against a liner or panel. Check for persistent saturation, leakage or bulging. A decorative timber or composite edge is not automatically a retaining structure; ask before increasing bed height or backfilling against it.

Walls steps and edges

Clear drains and outlets that are safely accessible. Do not cover weep holes or alter ground levels at the base of a wall. Keep steps free of leaves and check nosings and handrails. Report widening cracks, leaning, loose coping, settlement or soil washing out behind a wall.

Cleaning and repair

Use methods compatible with masonry, timber, metal and any coating. Do not patch an unidentified crack or seal a drainage opening as a guessed solution. Avoid drilling into a wall or planter where services, waterproofing or structural reinforcement may be present.

If stability is in question

Stop using the affected structure or route and keep others away. Photograph from a safe position and contact us. Do not climb, lean on or test a suspect structure. Any major alteration needs a fresh specification rather than a routine maintenance treatment.

KEEPING DRAINAGE WORKING

Drainage routes need to stay open. Water should follow the design rather than being redirected towards the building or neighbouring land.

What you can check

Clear leaves from accessible channel grates and surface outlets. Inspect during or after rain from a safe place and note where water collects. Only remove covers or silt baskets that your handover identifies as customer-accessible, and refit them correctly.

What needs a specialist

Do not enter a chamber, lift heavy covers, dismantle pipework or excavate a soakaway. Ask for help with repeated blockage, damaged covers, unexplained odours or persistent standing water. Do not add chemicals to a drain in an attempt to dissolve a problem.

Protect permeable surfaces

Keep soil, fine sand and building debris off permeable paving and its drainage joints. Use the specified material if a joint needs replenishing. Do not seal it or sweep an ordinary jointing sand into it; this can change how it accepts water.

Avoid unintended changes

Ask before raising border levels, fitting solid edging, enclosing a deck or changing a downpipe discharge. Keep the building's air bricks and required clearances exposed. A new garden shed, planter or stored material can obstruct an existing water route.

A useful report

Tell us when pooling starts, how long it remains, whether it happens in light or heavy rain and what has changed nearby. Include wide views and safe close-ups. Keep people away from displaced covers or unsafe flooded steps until they have been assessed.

GRAVEL RESIN SURFACES AND ARTIFICIAL LAWNS

Use this section only where these materials form part of your project. They have different cleaning and repair needs from ordinary paving or turf.

Gravel and decorative aggregate

Rake displaced material gently and keep the intended depth and edge restraints. Remove leaf litter and weeds before they become established. Do not cover drains or ventilation with loose aggregate. Match replacement size and type; finer material can change drainage or become compacted.

Resin bound and resin bonded surfaces

Confirm which system you have and its curing and loading limits. Sweep grit, deal with spills promptly and follow its cleaner and wash-pressure instructions. Do not treat cracking, loose stone, damaged edges or persistent pooling as a cleaning problem. Ask before patching or recoating.

Artificial grass where already installed

Clear debris, clean pet contamination promptly and follow the supplied product's rinsing and brushing guidance. Avoid heat, solvents and heavy dragging. Keep drainage openings clear; report lifted edges or opening seams rather than trying to glue them with an unknown adhesive.

Know the limitations

Artificial grass is not a living lawn and still needs maintenance. Do not assume all infill, disinfectants or weed treatments are suitable. Keep barbecues and hot objects away from resin and synthetic surfaces. Their loading capacity is set by the whole installation, not the visible finish.

Responsible care

Begin with manual clearing and gentle cleaning. Keep chemicals and washwater away from soil, wildlife habitats and water features. When repairs or replacement become necessary, ask about the correct removal and material recovery route for the product.

PONDS AND WATER FEATURES

Regular observation is more helpful than frequent major intervention. Wildlife ponds, fish ponds and ornamental features need different routines.

Water and wildlife

Check changes in level and remove excess leaf litter within safe reach. Normal evaporation differs from a leak; note the weather and the rate of loss. Only top up when appropriate for the pond type, using suitable water. Do not move plants or animals between ponds or release invasive plants.

Avoid a sudden clear out

Thin vegetation and manage debris gradually so animals retain shelter. Follow the agreed seasonal plan for a larger clean. Keep useful marginal planting, but prevent growth from blocking an outlet or equipment. Leave wildlife undisturbed whenever practical.

Pumps filters and electrical supply

Use the supplied equipment instructions for cleaning, servicing and winter operation. Never run a pump dry. Isolate using the identified safe control before permitted maintenance; do not handle submerged electrical equipment or damaged connections. Repeated tripping or poor flow needs assessment.

Treatments and cold weather

Check suitability for the plants, fish and other animals before adding a treatment. Do not mix products or guess dosage. Follow the specific winter advice for pumps and pipework. Avoid hitting ice or pouring boiling water into the pond.

When to contact us

Report unexplained rapid water loss, exposed liner damage, persistent loss of flow or faulty equipment. Keep children and vulnerable visitors safely away from open water; this handbook is not a supervision or barrier plan. Approach only from a safe, secure edge.

IRRIGATION AND WATERING SYSTEMS

A watering system still needs observation. Soil, plant growth and weather change, so a fixed timer is not a complete care plan.

Check coverage

Observe a normal watering cycle. Look for blocked emitters, leaks, disconnected hoses or water flowing onto paths rather than soil. Check moisture near the roots at representative points; one working emitter does not prove the whole bed is receiving water.

Adjust thoughtfully

Use the handover settings as a starting point and review after weather changes. Avoid watering saturated soil. New plants and containers may need a different programme from established beds. Ask before changing an unfamiliar pressure reducer, valve or controller setting.

Cleaning and repairs

Follow the manufacturer's procedure for filters and accessible parts. Isolate the supply before permitted maintenance and keep dirt out of fittings. Do not alter underground pipes or backflow-protection equipment yourself. Mark the routes for anyone digging in the garden.

Preparing for frost

Follow the installed system's winterisation instructions. Depending on the product, exposed timers, reducers or other removable components may need draining and frost-free storage. Do not assume a buried line is protected. Have any specialist draining or compressed-air procedure carried out by a competent person.

Restarting and holidays

Check for leaks and uneven coverage when restarting. Confirm the timer clock and batteries where applicable. Before a holiday, test the system and arrange someone to check plants. Automatic irrigation does not remove the need for an establishment watering plan.

LIGHTING AND POWERED EQUIPMENT

Keep the operating manuals and the location of safe isolation controls. Electrical and powered systems need the right competence for repairs.

Routine visual checks

From a safe position, look for cracked light fittings, loose mounting, damaged visible cable, water inside fittings or a gate that behaves unexpectedly. Keep leaf litter and vegetation clear where the equipment instructions require it. Do not open sealed housings or bury connections under mulch.

Cleaning safely

Switch off using the control identified at handover, and only clean accessible external surfaces in the way the supplier permits. Do not direct a pressure washer at lights, controllers, sockets, junction boxes or gate motors. Allow hot fittings to cool before touching them.

A fault needs assessment

If a circuit repeatedly trips, a fitting is waterlogged, a cable is damaged or a lock fails, stop using the affected equipment and contact a competent specialist. Do not repeatedly reset protection, splice cables, replace a fuse with a higher rating or bypass a safety device.

Powered gates and locks

Keep the travel area clear and follow the documented emergency-release procedure. Do not improvise a release method or defeat obstacle protection. Retain the agreed service schedule and records; customer observation does not replace specialist safety checks.

Changes to your garden

Tell us before digging, fitting new borders or attaching a new screen close to service routes. Do not add outdoor sockets or lights to an installation without a suitable design and qualified installation. Equipment specifications and certification remain with the project handover.

YOUR SEASONAL CARE PLAN

Use this as a reminder, then adapt it to your actual materials, plants and equipment. Weather and condition determine the work.

A simple annual rhythm

Season	Care to review
Spring	Inspect winter damage. Clean surfaces gently. Check new growth, lawn condition and irrigation. Review supports and ties.
Summer	Check establishment watering and containers. Adjust mowing to heat and growth. Clear spills and algae. Inspect pond level and deck temperature.
Autumn	Remove leaf build-up. Review turf and planting needs. Clear accessible drains. Plan species-specific pruning and winter protection.
Winter	Avoid damaging frozen or saturated lawns. Keep steps safe. Follow equipment frost guidance. Inspect structures after storms.

More frequent checks

During dry spells, check newly planted areas and new turf more often. After strong winds, inspect fences, gates, screens and exposed trees. After heavy rain, note any change in drainage. Increase clearing where leaves, shade or pond-side deposits create slippery surfaces.

Plan care around the garden you have

A maintenance visit can review condition, agree priorities and identify work needing a specialist. Tell us what you can manage yourself and where you need help. We can discuss an appropriate scope; no recurring visit or service is created automatically by this handbook.

Record what changes

Use photographs taken from the same position and note the dates of treatments, inspections and any new additions. This helps us give clearer advice and prevents unnecessary repeat work.

REPORTING A CONCERN

Clear information helps us understand a problem and agree the right next step. You do not need to diagnose it first.

Make the area safe

If paving, a railing, gate, step, wall or deck appears unstable, stop using that area and prevent others from approaching. Do not test its strength or dismantle it. For damaged electrical equipment, avoid contact and use only the safe isolation method you know.

Tell us what you have noticed

Include your name and project address, the location of the change, when it began and whether it is getting worse. Describe recent weather, use, cleaning or treatments, and any alterations made since handover. Note whether the issue affects safe access or ordinary use.

Photographs that help

Send a wide view showing the location and a closer image of the problem, taken safely. For plants, include both the whole plant and the affected growth. For water pooling, show the surrounding levels and outlets. Do not remove slabs or equipment covers to obtain a picture.

What happens next

We will review the information and explain whether further details, a product check or an inspection are needed. Keep the area as observed where safe, and ask before attempting a treatment or repair that could obscure the cause. We will discuss any proposed work and its scope rather than assuming a remedy.

Contact details

info@fbslandscapes.co.uk | 0121 339 5070 | fbslandscapes.co.uk. Keep your project documents available when contacting us. For an immediate emergency, use the appropriate emergency service or qualified emergency contractor rather than waiting for an email response.

YOUR PROJECT HANDOVER RECORD

Complete this with the information supplied for your garden. Ask us about any important field that is missing.

Project details

Record	Details
Customer and project address	_____
Completion and handover date	_____
Paving and jointing product	_____
Decking range colour and framework	_____
Fence gate and coating details	_____
Planting plan and establishment care	_____
Pumps irrigation and lighting manuals	_____
Safe isolation and inspection access	_____
Curing periods and loading restrictions	_____
Guarantee and service documents	_____

Your care notes

Keep a dated note of maintenance, concerns and advice received. Record the exact cleaner or coating used and retain its instructions. Photograph the finished garden at handover and after any authorised alteration.

Before leaving the handover

Check that you know the initial watering plan, first use or mowing restrictions, how to operate equipment safely and whom to contact. This blank record is a prompt; it does not replace the actual specification or product manuals.

FURTHER GUIDANCE

Your exact product manual and project handover remain the most useful references. These organisations provide further background guidance.

Care reference links

[RHS turf establishment](#)

[RHS watering plants](#)

[RHS tree and shrub planting](#)

[RHS hedge growing guide](#)

[RHS pond care](#)

[Marshalls paving care guidance](#)

[Ecoscape composite decking care](#)

[Ecoscape decking installation and care guide](#)

[Ecoscape composite fencing care](#)

[TDCA timber deck maintenance](#)

[Jacksons fencing product FAQs](#)

[Hozelock winter storage guidance](#)

Product differences matter

A link to a manufacturer is not confirmation that its product was used in your garden. Use the range and manual recorded at handover. Care instructions can change; check the current document before a specialist treatment or alteration.

About this edition

Prepared for FB & Sons from the supplied Customer Care Guide, Brand Guidelines Version 2 and Our Foundations July 2026. Expanded edition 2.0, October 2026. It keeps the original care topics and adds guidance for a wider range of installations. Individual specifications, guarantee terms and service arrangements are not changed by this edition.