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The Plumbing Risk Register

7 Decisions That Determine
Whether Your Development
Passes or Fails Handover

How to use this register

You followed the process. QS on board, drawings approved, engineer supervising, price tendered fairly. And the plumbing still failed. If that has happened to you, the money you spent fixing it was not bad luck. It was born in one of seven decisions, months before a tenant ever turned a tap.

This register walks through those seven decisions in the order a project meets them. Under each one: what goes wrong, what it costs, and a short checklist to run against your current or next project. Tick what you can answer yes to. Anything unticked is unmanaged risk.

Ten minutes. Best read with your live project in mind.

Scoping

THE DECISION

What is and is not in the plumbing scope, agreed before anyone prices it.

WHAT GOES WRONG

Weak scoping leaves gaps between what you thought you bought and what gets delivered. The contractor prices what is written. The gaps surface on site as “that wasn’t in our scope”. You pay again for work you believed was included, or you fight about it while the programme slips.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ There is a written scope that lists what is included and what is excluded
- ☐ Someone technical, not just the QS, has read it against the drawings
- ☐ Rainwater, external drainage and water storage are named in it, not assumed
- ☐ You know who carries builder’s work: chases, sleeves, slab penetrations

Drawings and records

THE DECISION

Whether real design drawings exist before install, and as-built records after it.

WHAT GOES WRONG

Plumbers work from memory. Nothing is drawn, or the drawings stop matching the building by the second floor. Then a defect appears two years later and nobody knows where the pipes run. Walls get opened just to trace a line. Once the crew that fitted the system leaves site, your building becomes a guessing game. Every future repair is destructive and priced accordingly.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ Plumbing layout drawings exist and were produced before installation started
- ☐ Changes made on site get drawn, not just done
- ☐ You will receive as-built drawings at handover, and it is in the contract
- ☐ A stranger could find every concealed pipe using the records alone

Sourcing and procurement

THE DECISION

When materials are bought, from where, and what happens when the specified item is not available.

WHAT GOES WRONG

Late buying stalls the programme. Cheap buying puts substandard pipe and fittings into your walls. And when the specified item is out of stock, the substitution happens on site, decided by whoever is standing there, with no design input. That one swap can change system performance and it becomes your liability, not theirs.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ Materials are listed and priced against the design, not bought ad hoc
- ☐ Long-lead items were identified and ordered early
- ☐ There is a written rule for substitutions: who approves, against what spec
- ☐ You can trace what brand and class of pipe actually went into the building

Execution

THE DECISION

Who installs the system, and to what standard.

WHAT GOES WRONG

The cheapest crew wins the work. Then pressure imbalances, airlocks and blockages get built in. Waste pipes go in undersized and the blockages start after occupation, when fixing them means breaking finished work. Fittings fail early. Pipework runs where it was convenient, not where it was designed. You see none of this at handover because it is all behind tiles by then.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ You know the qualifications of the people actually on the tools, not just the firm
- ☐ Installation follows the drawings, and someone checks that it does
- ☐ Waste pipe sizing was designed, not left to the crew
- ☐ Work is inspected at stages, before it disappears behind finishes

Assurance, warranty and testing

THE DECISION

What tests, sign-offs and warranty records exist at completion.

WHAT GOES WRONG

The system is covered up untested. No pressure test records, no commissioning, no signed handover file. When defects appear, the contractor's phone is off, and you hold no evidence to pursue anyone with. You paid for a working system and you cannot prove what you got.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ Pipework is pressure tested before it is concealed, and the results are recorded
- ☐ The system is commissioned at completion, with a signed record
- ☐ Warranty terms exist in writing: what is covered, for how long, by whom
- ☐ You hold a handover file you could put in front of a lawyer if you had to

Maintenance

THE DECISION

Who is accountable for the plumbing after handover, and what the plan is.

WHAT GOES WRONG

Nobody is. The contractor is gone, the property manager has no records, and there is no plan. So the first blocked stack and the first pressure complaint land on your desk, from a buyer who paid you for a finished home. You carry the reputational cost of a system you cannot see and did not fit.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ A named party is accountable for the plumbing after handover
- ☐ A maintenance plan exists before occupation, not after the first complaint
- ☐ Whoever maintains it has the as-built records and knows the system
- ☐ Buyers and the property manager know who to call, and it is not you

Monetisation

THE DECISION

Whether the water system is designed to earn, not just to run.

WHAT GOES WRONG

The building's water setup could be billing, metering and monitoring from day one. Most never do, because nobody planned for it at design stage. Retrofitting meters and monitoring into a finished building is expensive, and sometimes structurally impossible. The return stays locked inside a system you already paid for.

CHECK YOUR PROJECT

- ☐ Metering and billing were discussed at design stage, not after completion
- ☐ The design allows unit-level metering, even if you activate it later
- ☐ Someone has priced what the water system could earn over the building's life
- ☐ You made a deliberate choice about this, rather than no choice

What your unticked boxes are telling you

Count them. Each one is a decision that is currently being made by default, by whoever happens to be on site, at your cost. On a 50-unit development, the remedial bill for getting one of these wrong is rarely less than the fee for getting all seven right.

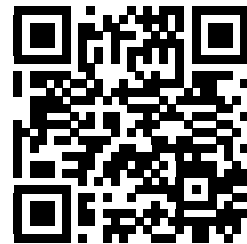
If any of the 7 decisions in this register made you uncomfortable, your Watertight Score will show you which ones need attention, before they cost you.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Take the Watertight Score. 12 questions, two to three minutes, instant result:

offers.oneplumbing.co.ke/score

Take the Watertight Score



SCAN TO BEGIN

**One accountable
team from
design through
handover.**