

Accreditation Process

(all members must pass)



All Accredited Installers must, as a minimum:

- ✓ Undergo a five point credit and background history check on the proprietors/directors which includes multiple Phoenix checks, credit scores, CCJ checks and similar trading name checks.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of their most recent accounts to prove financial stability.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a list of the last 6 months' customer installs. HICS will choose 10 customers, at random, to whom to send the Consumer Satisfaction Questionnaire.
- ✓ Provide HICS with details of a minimum of 3 key suppliers who can be independently approached for quality assurance purposes.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of their current company letterhead (to ensure compliance with the Companies Act 2006).
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of any sample quotation documents and any pre-contractual documents.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of any Consumer Contracts including Terms and Conditions.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of all guarantee/s for all products installed.
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of its Complaints Process and Nominated Complaints Handler.
- ✓ Provide HICS with proof of FCA registration (only required if using a finance facility).
- ✓ Provide HICS with a copy of their current Health and Safety Policy.
- ✓ Provide HICS proof of a) £2m Public Liability policy b) £10m Employer's Liability policy.

Annual Vetting

To ensure continued consumer satisfaction HICS has produced a comprehensive Member Performance Monitoring process. This monitors many aspects of the consumer experience and HICS members' adherence to all aspects of the Scheme Rules and Code of Practice. The three methods HICS will use are:

- ✓ Annual membership audit
- ✓ Monthly monitoring of customer complaints
- ✓ Quarterly monitoring of customer satisfaction surveys



"I strongly recommend you use a member of HICS"

Nick Ross
(former BBC Watchdog & Crimewatch Presenter)

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Home Improvement Consumer Protection Scheme Ltd (HICS) is a Company Limited by Guarantee.
Registered Address: Astley House, 29 Queens Road, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 1JU. Registered in England (Company Number 09507751).



hics

Home Improvement
Consumer Protection Scheme

Why you should always use a HICS member

- Kitchens, Bathrooms & Bedrooms
- Flooring, Heating & Roofing
- All Types of Boilers
- All General Home Improvements



I strongly recommend you use a HICS member.

Nick Ross
(former BBC Watchdog & Crimewatch presenter)



Protect Your Investment By Using A HICS Installer

Consumer Protection At Its Best!



Check You Are Protected!



“I think it’s vitally important that consumers protect themselves.”

Nick Ross (HICS Ambassador)

What Is HICS?

Who Are Ombudsman Services & What Do They Do?

The Home Improvement Consumer Protection Scheme (HICS) is a consumer protection organisation covering the installation of home improvement products. HICS ensure that consumers are dealt with professionally, courteously and sympathetically. Any products installed by HICS members must be fit for purpose, installed professionally and come with comprehensive guarantees which are covered by specialist insurance providing consumers with a high level of protection.

HICS also believes that consumers should have **FREE** access to robust dispute resolution and therefore provides consumers with **FREE** Mediation, **FREE** Independent Inspections to assist with installation or product malfunctions (at HICS discretion) and **FREE** access to an independent Ombudsman to help resolve any issues that may arise.

To that end, the HICS Scheme Rules & Code of Practice is a stringent set of rules that members must adhere to at all times in their dealings with consumers.

The Scheme’s ambassador is Nick Ross (former BBC Watchdog & Crimewatch presenter).



Lewis Shand Smith, Chief Ombudsman

HICS has appointed Ombudsman Services to investigate and resolve any disputes between HICS members and their customers that may not have been resolved at an earlier stage.

Ombudsman Services are the UK’s leading independent multisector ombudsman and are approved by the appropriate regulatory bodies to provide redress schemes. Ombudsman Services provide independent dispute resolution and run national, private sector ombudsman schemes including the communications, energy, property, copyright licensing sectors and the Green Deal. Ombudsman Services currently employ more than 500 people at its Head Office based in Warrington.

Ombudsman Services:

- Provide an independent, impartial and completely free service to consumers to help resolve disputes between HICS members and consumers who are interacting with them.
- Can make financial awards for loss, distress, inconvenience or breach of contract (the maximum amount of compensation that can be awarded is £100,000) which HICS will enforce.
- Are independent of members & consumers and will make a decision believed to be just and fair in the circumstances.
- Resolve disputes without the need to go to court and the service is entirely free of charge to consumers.

To contact Ombudsman Services Tel: 0330 440 1634

Products HICS Scheme Protects:*

- Kitchens
- Bathrooms
- Bedrooms
- Home Office
- Hot Tubs
- Roofing & Guttering
- Flooring & Canopies
- Under Floor Heating
- Driveways
- Double Glazing
- Air Conditioning
- All Types of Boilers
- Insulation
- Lighting
- Renewables

* NOTE: The scheme does not cover commercial contracts or supply only contracts (for example where the customer has arranged their own fitting team for the installation).

Benefits To Consumers Using A HICS Member:

- HICS Scheme is fully endorsed by Nick Ross (former BBC Watchdog & Crimewatch Presenter)**
- Fully Vetted and Accredited Installers**
- Free Consumer Advice Line: 0800 0192 664**
- Free Deposit & Stage Payment Protection (up to 25% of the contract value)**
- Free Insurance Backed Guarantee (for every customer)**
- Free Mediation (to help fully resolve any disputes should they arise)**
- Free Independent Inspection (to assist with installation/product defects at HICS discretion)**
- Free access to an independent Ombudsman (to conclude disputes without incurring legal fees or costs)**

Why I strongly recommend using a HICS member....

“With HICS you get accredited installers, independently backed guarantees (even if the firm refuses to help you or goes out of business), free access to industry inspectors at HICS discretion, professional mediators and – if you’re unsatisfied – a highly regarded Ombudsman Service who can settle your dispute with the power of the law behind them. There are lots of confusing trade association logos in the building and home improvement sectors, but few offer complete consumer protection. HICS is the real deal. And you don’t pay extra for the safeguards.”

Nick Ross

(Former BBC Watchdog and Crimewatch presenter).



Real consumer protection

What You Will Receive When Placing An Order With A HICS Member?

Once you have signed a contract with a HICS member, the installer should register your details with HICS.

HICS will issue to you:-

- Customer Registration Certificate
- Documents protecting your deposit
- Documents protecting your guarantee
- Customer Survey and pre-paid envelope (to continually monitor a member’s performance)



If you don’t receive your documentation within 5 working days then call:-

0800 0192 664
(freephone)

Check You Are Registered With HICS!

Follow these three simple steps:

- Go to www.hicsscheme.org.uk/jobfinder
- Enter your Surname
- Enter your Postcode

OR Contact:

0800 0192 664
(freephone)

OR

info@hicsscheme.org.uk

NOTE: If you are not registered within 5 days of placing your order with your installer, please contact HICS for assistance.

To verify your installer is currently a member please call:

0800 0192 664 or visit www.hicsscheme.org.uk
(freephone)