

## Timber Movement & Aftercare

Please keep this with your paperwork.

**In this heat, read this first.** Timber dries fast in a heatwave. Over the coming weeks expect gaps to open between the boards, small splits to appear, and knots to shrink or weep resin. This is normal, it happens to all timber, and most of it reverses when the weather turns wet again. Nothing is wrong with your timber.

### Why timber moves

Wood takes moisture in from the air when it is damp and gives it back when it is dry. As it dries it shrinks; as it takes moisture in it swells. This never stops — seasoning, treating and painting do not prevent it. Movement happens across the width and thickness of a board, hardly at all along its length, and unevenly: the face in the sun dries faster than the face in the shade, which is why boards cup and gates bow. It is greatest in the first year, especially through the first hot summer.

### What you will see — hot, dry weather

- **Gaps opening between boards**, sometimes wide enough to see daylight through.
- **Splits and surface cracks**, particularly on the sunny side.
- **Knots shrinking, loosening or dropping out**, and **resin weeping** from them. Resin hardens and weathers off.
- **Boards cupping or bowing**, as one face dries faster than the other.
- **Doors, windows and gates going slack**, rattling, or no longer catching. **Creaking** as things expand.

### What you will see — wet, cold weather

- **Gaps closing** and splits tightening.
- **Doors, windows and gates stiffening**, binding on the frame or catching on the ground.
- **Timber darkening** when wet, and **surface mould or white bloom** on newly treated timber, which weathers off.

### The ground moves too

In a long dry spell clay soils shrink, and nearby trees and hedges make it worse. Bases, bearers and posts can settle, lift or tilt. If a gate starts catching or a building looks out of square after a dry summer, the ground beneath it is usually the cause rather than the timber.

### What we ask you to do

- **Treat it and keep treating it.** Use a good exterior preservative or finish and re-apply as recommended. Do not leave new timber untreated over its first summer.
- **Treat every face — including the ones you cannot see.** Top and bottom edges of gates and doors, and any end you cut, absorb water fastest.
- **Let air get round it.** Keep buildings clear of walls, fences and hedges, cut vegetation back, keep vents clear.
- **Ventilate the inside.** Open doors and windows in hot weather so both sides dry at a similar rate.
- **Do not seal or line the inside without asking us** — insulation and vapour barriers trap moisture and make things worse.
- **Ease and adjust twice a year.** Oil hinges, catches, latches and bolts; tighten fixings that have worked loose.
- **Keep water away from the base**, clear gutters, and **do not overload** floors, shelves or roofs.

### What is covered, and what is not

Everything above is the normal behaviour of timber. It is **not a defect and is not covered by our guarantee** — no timber product from any supplier behaves differently. **What our guarantee does cover** is faulty materials and workmanship: something made badly, a component that has failed, a door that cannot be closed even after adjustment. Please contact us before arranging any work yourself. **Your legal rights are not affected** — this notice describes how timber normally behaves; it does not limit what you are entitled to if something is genuinely wrong.

**Call 01263 713411 or email [shedsales@thaxterstimber.co.uk](mailto:shedsales@thaxterstimber.co.uk)** — please send photographs where you can.

**Acknowledgement.** I confirm I have received and read this notice, and understand that timber is a natural material which shrinks, swells, splits, cups and moves with the weather, and that this is not a defect.

Customer \_\_\_\_\_ Order no. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Delivered / installed by \_\_\_\_\_