

The domino doorways

For the fabricator and installer, a front door is more than just a focal point for kerb appeal: it is a complex assembly that must maintain structural integrity, thermal efficiency, and security compliance over decades. However, many units currently in situ across UK houses may be under performing, in ways that are not immediately obvious to the end-user



The Residence Collection, has teamed up with Window Ware and RegaLead to share five key red flags to watch for, helping installers and fabricators advise their customers when it's time to replace their front doors. These red flags include:

Hardware fatigue and mechanical failure

If the front door handle is hard to turn, feels loose, or the finish looks rusty or faded, it usually means the inside parts may be worn. This can make a front door tricky to use and give it an old, tired look. Eventually, this could result in the handle breaking completely, leaving the door unusable.

Sarah Binns, customer operations and marketing director at Window Ware, says: "A wobbly or stiff handle often points to internal mechanism failure. Visible corrosion is another clear sign that it is time to replace. Regular checks should be advised, as well as applying white grease to locks and graphite powder to cylinders and avoiding sprays like WD-40, which can cause long-term damage."

Thermal performance

If cold air is sneaking in and around a front door, it could be because the door isn't sealing properly. Doors that sag or have worn hinges can let heat escape, making the home less comfortable and more expensive to heat.

Binns suggests an easy test: "Close a piece of paper in your door and lift the handle. If you can pull it out easily, your seal isn't working effectively and you are losing heat."

The glazing performance gap

If the decorative glass on a front door rattles, looks warped or has cracks, it might be old and not doing a good job keeping the home insulated.

Guy Hubble, joint managing director at Regalead, says: "Older panels, especially those with single glazing and traditional lead comes, can loosen over time and often don't meet modern insulation or safety standards. We recommend replacing it with sealed decorative units that offer the same visual style with much better performance."

Structural security and tolerance issues

If a front door jams, sticks or the lock doesn't catch properly, the home might not be as secure as it should be.

A door that doesn't close and lock well can also let in cold air and moisture.

Sarah Binns says: "A functioning lock should draw the door tight to the frame. If it doesn't catch or requires force, you may need to adjust or replace components before bigger problems set in."

Aesthetic degradation

If it's scratched, faded, rusty, or just looks old, it can make any home seem less cared for. A fresh new door can really lift the overall style and value of a property.

Guy Hubble says: "Worn-out decorative glass and weathered finishes may look tired, but they can also signal reduced structural integrity. A new door brings both aesthetic and functional upgrades."

The opportunity for the trade

The average lifespan of a residential door is 15 to 30 years, but shifting consumer expectations regarding sustainability and smart-home integration are shortening that window.

Jo Trotman, sales and marketing manager at The Residence Collection, says: "Regular maintenance can only go so far. By educating installers on these technical red flags, fabricators can position themselves as providers of solutions rather than just components. With tools like our Door, Designer we are helping the trade bridge the gap between identifying a failing door and delivering a bespoke, high-performance replacement that meets the demands of 21st-century living." □

www.residencecollection.co.uk



Jo Trotman