Damp and Mould Policy

Who this policy is for

This policy is for all residents of Wyedean Houasdsing Association.

Introduction

We understand that a well-maintained and safe home gives people the space and security they need to live well. We do all we can to maintain our homes to a high standard. This includes acting quickly to prevent and treat damp and mould to reduce the risk of harm to our residents' health.

We:

- have a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould
- carry out a regular inspection and maintenance programme to help prevent damp and mould
- act quickly to treat and prevent further damp and mould where it does occur
- advise residents on how to prevent and limit damp and condensation
- work with other registered housing providers, environmental health and energy advice agencies to share and adopt best practice
- comply with all our statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements

The legislation and regulations that inform this policy

- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Homes Standard 2012
- Housing Act 2004
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Social Housing (Regulation Act) 2023
- The Hazards in Social Housing Regulations 2025 (Awaabs Law)

Types of damp and mould

Leak
Caused by faulty supply and waste pipework. Can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings. The area stays damp regardless of weather conditions and requires repair.

Rising damp
Water rises from the ground into the home through a faulty damp proof course (DPC) or masonry without a DPC. Can affect basements and ground floor rooms. Noticeable all year but more in winter. Is uncommon and requires repair.

Condensation
The most common type of damp and mould. Caused when moisture in the air comes into contact with colder surfaces, often during normal household activities. Usually found in kitchens, bathrooms, corners of rooms and areas with low air circulation. Good practice in the home will reduce condensation and in many cases will prevent it causing damp and mould.

Mould is a fungus that grows on damp surfaces and spreads through microscopic spores in the air.

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How to manage damp and mould

Preventing damp and mould
We advise our residents on how to manage moisture in their homes to reduce any potential condensation. Where a repair is needed and it is our responsibility to do it, we will complete the work in line with this policy.

We routinely assess damp and mould as part of our regular stock surveys and tenancy audits so we can address it quickly where it does occur. If a repair is needed and it is not our responsibility to do it, we'll check to make sure it's been completed and any damp and mould issues are resolved.

Dealing with damp and mould
Under the terms of their tenancy agreement residents must report any problems with damp and mould to us as soon as possible. We manage all cases in line with this policy.

We will investigate reports of damp and mould in leasehold properties where we are responsible for repairs to the external structure to make sure there are no faults with the structure that could be causing or contributing to the problem. We'll repair any faults in line with this policy.

How we respond to reports of damp and mould

We respond to reports of damp and mould in line with our statutory requirements.

All damp and mould inspections must identify the presence of Category 1 Hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). We record and update informationon all hazards on HomeMaster, a web-based housing management service.

When we receive a report of damp and mould we inspect the property and review all the appropriate information, including photos of damp and mould, previous inspection reports, repairs history, stock survey results and any vulnerabilities or medical conditions the resident has. The flow chart at the end of this document shows the steps we will take.

In line with our Repairs Policy, we will carry out all emergency repairs within 24 hours. Where an emergency repair cannot be made safe within 24 hours, we will offer temporary alternative accommodation.

Where the standard inspection process shows that we have taken all reasonable steps to address damp and mould in a property, we will write to the resident to explain this. Reasonable steps include:

- All necessary repairs have been completed
- Survey details confirm there are no defects with the building itself
- We have advised the resident on how to mitigate and manage damp and mould

If we have completed a virtual standard inspection, the tenant can ask us to carry out an in- person inspection. We must then complete a 'renewed' inspection. Where there are potential significant hazards, we must complete the renewed inspection within 10 working days of the date it was requested and identify the remedial work needed to prevent the hazard re-occurring.

We must keep residents up to date with the progress of damp and mould works and the outcome of all inspections. Following an inspection, we will send the resident a written summary of the report within 3 working days, which must include:

- Whether an emergency or significant hazard was identified
- What action is needed
- Target timescale to complete the works
- If no action is needed
- Why no action is needed
- Information on contact details and nest steps

If a hazard is identified and confirmed as an emergency during an inspection, the property services officer must raise a works order immediately and in line with our Repairs Policy.

For cases not identified as an emergency, the property services officer must also raise a works order on the day of the inspection. Works must start within 5 working days of the inspection and can be temporary measures where necessary. If further works are required and it is not possible to begin them within 5 days, we will start them as soon as reasonably practicable and within 12 weeks of the end of the investigation. The property services team will regularly update the resident until all necessary works are completed.

We will also update HomeMaster with all the reasonable steps taken to address damp and mould in each property. Lessons learnt from damp and mould cases will also be recorded on HomeMaster and discussed at regular meetings.

How we support and communicate with our residents

We keep residents up to date, including informing them of their rights under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and providing timescales for inspections and the completion of works required.

Where residents have damp and mould and are struggling to pay their energy bills, with their approval we will pass their details on to partner agencies such as the local authority, the Department for Work and Pensions or Citizens Advice, who will be able to offer support.

We will take all reasonable steps to contact residents. However, where a case has been identified as an emergency and we have not been able to contact the resident to discuss reports of damp and mould and arrange an inspection, we will follow our No Access Policy.

Property services officers and our contractors will use the checklist below to confirm possible causes of damp and mould in a property.

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Potential Repair Issue or Building Defect	Action to be taken If Answer is 'No'
Does property have adequate heating and is this is this fully functioning and controllable?	Order to be raised to address heating breakdown in line with Repairs Policy
Is the property free from leaks and/or water penetration i.e. sound roof, drainage, guttering etc	Raise repair order to remediate leak including the supply of low energy usage dehumidifiers for a min. period of 2 weeks
Does the property have adequate humidistat-controlled ventilation to the kitchen and bathroom(s)?	Raise repair order for system to be overhauld, cleaned, repaired or replaced as required. Consider need for PIV system.
Do windows have trickle ventilation?	Identify whether it is posisble for these to be retrofitted, if this is not possible and windows are due for replacement in the coming years consider the need for alternative ventilation and partallyopening windows for fresh air intake.
Where required: Do results show propery has an average temp of 18-22 with a relative humidity no higher than 60%	Provide resident with help and advice on ways to reduce humidity and need to keep property at the ambient temperature.

Proactive approach

Where multiple reports of damp and mould have been made across a scheme or block, the property services team will contact all residents to identify other potential cases. Where present, these cases will be managed as above.

Where residents consistently refuse access for damp and mould inspections or remedial works, we will consider possession action.

Damp and mould complaints

All complaints will be managed in line with our Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy and Procedure.

Repeated complaints relating to damp and mould will be escalated to the housing services manager.

Residents can give us feedback on our service through our Complaints, Comments and Compliments policy. This includes complaints about how we've carried out repairs to damage caused by damp and mould or alterations to help prevent damp and mould.

Management and governance

Damp and mould cases will form part of our overall compliance reporting to our board. Reports will show the number of cases and how long they took to resolve. Key Performance Indicators are:

- Total number of cases Including the total number of emergency cases
- % of inspections carried out within the required timeframe
- Total number of properties with issues resolved in quarter

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The property services and management teams will review cases regularly, along with high repair properties.

Property services officers are responsible for managing cases to resolution and for keeping residents informed.

We will review data on HomeMaster as part of our internal compliance checks.