

# Damp & Mould Policy



<b>Policy:</b>	Damp & Mould Policy
<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this Policy review is to set out our position in addressing reports of damp and mould reported in our properties by our tenants, and to ensure that appropriate mitigations for these conditions are carried out and meet recommendations from the Internal Audit carried out in June 2025.
<b>Last Revised on:</b>	10/10/2023
<b>Review Date:</b>	16/09/2025
<b>Next review date:</b>	September 2028
<b>Guidance:</b>	<p>Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)</p> <p>Housing (Scotland) Act 1987</p> <p>Housing (Scotland) Act 2006</p> <p>The Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004</p> <p>Putting Safety First: a briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners</p> <p>Scottish Housing Regulator update on Technical Guidance July 2025</p> <p>ACS Model Policy</p>
<b>Regulatory Standards:</b>	<p><b>Standard 1:</b> The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p><b>Standard 2:</b> The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p><b>Standard 4:</b> The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p><b>Standard 6:</b> The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.</p>
<b>Other Relevant Policies</b>	<p>Maintenance and Repair Policy</p> <p>Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>Landlords Safety Manual</p> <p>Privacy Policy</p> <p>Complaints Policy</p> <p>Equality &amp; HR Policy</p>
<b>Date reviewed by People &amp; Policy Sub Committee:</b>	16/09/2025
<b>Date approved by Board (or P&amp;P Sub) if delegated):</b>	Board approval on the 30 September 2025 following recommendation from the People & Policy Sub-Committee on the 16 September 2025.
<b>Publish on the Website:</b>	Yes

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## LIST OF APPENDICES

**Appendix 1. Procedure Note & Process Map**

**Appendix 2. Pre-inspection Template**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) issued a letter to all social landlords on 1 December 2022 to provide advice on tenant safety, damp and mould. This letter was issued following the findings in the coroner's report on the tragic death of a child who died of a respiratory condition caused by mould in his home.
- 1.2 This case shone a light on issues related to damp and mould in the housing sector and displayed a clear link between mould and damp in houses and serious health conditions. The letter from the SHR asked landlords to consider what systems they have in place to manage and prevent mould and dampness in tenants' homes. The SHR stated that landlords should have "appropriate, proactive systems to identify and deal with any reported cases of mould and damp timeously and effectively."
- 1.3 Following on from this letter, a document was produced jointly by the SHR, the Chartered Institute of Housing, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers, titled "Putting Safety First: a briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners".
- 1.4 The briefing note provides lots of practical and useful guidance on how to prevent and treat damp and mould in properties to ensure that landlords are proactive, understanding of tenants' experiences, and effective in resolving any underlying issues that are causing damp and mould. The guidance set out in the briefing note has formed the basis of this new damp and mould policy, with additional elements of best practice being incorporated to ensure that individual organisations can develop robust and effective damp and mould management procedures to accompany the new policy.

The policy has encompassed the main requirements set out in the briefing note such as:

- implementing preventative measures;
- early intervention;
- tackling the root cause of damp and mould;
- ensuring complaints are dealt with appropriately and timeously;
- ensuring ongoing monitoring of treated damp and mould to prevent a reoccurrence;
- supporting tenants dealing with damp and mould; and
- ensuring robust data management and record keeping arrangements are in place.

- 1.5 Further guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator was issued in January 2025 with the outcome of their consultation on the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC)

and the addition of a new indicator for Damp & Mould to be collected from 01/04/2025. With a revision to Technical Guidance on the ARC (including reporting requirements on damp and mould) received in July 2025.

## **2.0 AIM OF THE POLICY.**

- 2.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure appropriate control measures are in place to adequately manage damp and mould within properties.
- 2.2 The procedures detailed within this section have been written to ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that problems with damp and mould are identified and dealt with promptly.

## **3.0 DEFINITIONS.**

- 3.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator has revised guidance in January 2025 to include a breakdown of damp and mould cases reported in the year, this is a new indicator within the ARC (Annual Return on the Charter) from 2025/26 onwards. Cases will be reported broken down into the following categories
- 3.2 Damp due to structural issues: “Penetrating damp” is damp which results from issues with the building which leads to water ingress such as leaking down pipes, missing pointing to the brick work, damaged or loose roof tiles and blocked guttering. “Rising damp” is caused by defects in the foundation of the building. Both of these are already covered by the Tolerable Standard.
- 3.3 Other Issues: Defective plumbing, leaks from water and waste pipes, especially in bathrooms and kitchens are relatively common. They can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings and the affected area is usually damp to the touch. In cases when leaks are not attended to, rot may become established in wooden hoists and floorboards leading to a risk of collapse in severe cases. Any report of water penetration / leaks will be initially dealt with as a reactive repair, a new damp and mould case will only be raised if mould or damp has arisen due to the tenant failing to report the repair or due to a failed repair.
- 3.4 Condensation – Condensation damp is caused by an excess of moisture in the air and poor ventilation. This causes water droplets to form on cold surfaces such as windows and walls. The risk of condensation forming is increased through daily living activities such as bathing, cooking and drying clothes. This type of damp can cause mould to form on the affected surfaces.

The amount of condensation in a home depends on a number of factors:

- How much water vapour is produced by the actions of residents
- How cold or warm the property is
- How much air circulation/ventilation there is in the property
- How well the property has been insulated

All factors will need to be looked at to reduce the problems associated with condensation.

#### **4.0 LEGAL AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.**

4.1 The Policy complies with the following legislation and regulatory requirements.

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- The Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- Putting Safety First: a briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners

#### **5.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES.**

5.1 The organisation will develop robust internal procedures on dealing with issues of damp and mould. These procedures will cover triaging of reports from tenants or members of staff of damp and mould, escalation procedures and monitoring of reports of damp and mould to ensure the issues are dealt with promptly. The current procedures are attached at Appendix 1. All customer services staff will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy as detailed below with roles and responsibilities outlined at 5.7.

5.2 It is important when dealing with issues of damp and mould to have a thorough understanding of the condition of all housing stock to identify and manage issues at an early stage. As such, stock condition data will be gathered to identify where properties have a greater risk of developing issues with damp and mould.

5.3 This information will be gathered by including damp and mould checks as part of any annual property inspection programmes, through stock conditions surveys, at the void stage of properties and checking neighbouring properties for damp and mould when problems have developed in a nearby home with similar characteristics.

5.4 Where damp or mould is identified in void properties, any issues should be treated before reletting the property.

- 5.5 Void checklists will include checking extractor fans and ventilation systems to ensure they are working properly. Any defects will be noted and repaired in line with the organisation's repair and maintenance policies.
- 5.6 Other preventative measures, such as gutter cleaning, will be included in planned maintenance programmes.
- 5.7 Roles and responsibilities within the Customer Services team are detailed below:

Area of responsibility	Staff Responsible	Escalating to
Collating ongoing stock condition information	All Customer Services Staff	Asset Officers / Senior Customer Services Officer (if issues found)
Void Inspections	Senior Customer Services Assistant	Customer Services Officer
Management of Damp & Mould cases	Asset Officers	Senior Customer Services Officer
Administration of damp & mould cases	Customer Services Assistants	Senior Customer Services Officer
High priority damp & mould cases	Asset Officer	Customer Services Manager

## 6.0 TREATMENT & ONGOING MANAGEMENT OF MOULD AND DAMP

- 6.1 Reports of damp and mould should be taken seriously and not treated as a lifestyle problem caused by the tenant. When responding to damp and mould cases, staff should consider the personal characteristics of tenants and whether anybody would have an increased risk to their health from living with damp and mould. Young children, older and disabled people, and people with lung conditions, compromised immune systems and certain other health problems are at increased risk of illnesses resulting

from damp and mould. Procedures should be aimed at tackling the root cause of damp and mould in addition to treating the effects of it.

- 6.2 The Association will categorise the source of the problem based on the cause of the damp (as detailed at Section 3) and prioritise the ongoing management of each case based on the priority framework detailed below:

Priority	Risk	Action Taken	Timescales for response
1	<b>High risk</b> – danger to remain within the home (large mushrooms, spores visible) or tenant reports difficulty breathing or tenant has significant health issues or is otherwise at risk if remains in home.	<b>Decant Required;</b> Report to Customer Services Manager for necessary authorisation for decant. A full remediation / plan of works is required and to be arranged with appropriate contractors and details of the work with estimated timescales provided to the tenant. Case will be recorded in Homemaster and reported as a damp & mould case and associated procedures followed until case resolved.	Pre-Inspection within 1 working day
2	<b>Medium Risk</b> – Consistent and pungent smell of damp, mould and condensation or visible signs of significant damp, mould or condensation and if left untreated the situation would worsen.	<b>Immediate action;</b> assisted ventilation or heating required in home (Dehumidifier or additional heating), arrange for clean with antifungal wash and commence investigation to root cause and arrange works in line with DPHA repairs policy. Case will be recorded in Homemaster and reported as a damp & mould case and associated procedures followed until case resolved.	Pre-Inspection within 3 working days
3	<b>Low Risk</b> - Damp, mould or condensation can be managed though education, cleaning or other small interventions.	<b>Advice only;</b> Case will be recorded on Homemaster but will not be included within regulatory return for damp & mould cases as per regulatory guidance. The associated procedures will be followed and advice leaflet given to tenant. Case	Pre – Inspection within 3 working days.



		will be recorded then closed as no further action.	
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6.3 In cases where damp is reported as an ongoing issue, ongoing monitoring procedures will be considered to prevent mould and damp reoccurring. This may include the installation of indoor air quality monitoring units or smart sensors to track humidity and CO2 levels where damp and mould have been reported repeatedly.

6.4 To be sure efforts to treat damp and mould have been effective, initial treatments must be supplemented by a follow up visit to check whether the problem has truly been resolved. This should take place at least six weeks after the initial treatment, although any issues reported by tenants in the meantime should be responded to promptly.

6.5 Where a tenant fails to allow access or to allow for either inspection or treatment of a damp or mould issue on at least 3 attempts made to gain access, the case should be referred to the Customer Services Manager to gain authority to enforce the association's right to access a tenancy as per Section 5.11 of the tenancy agreement. The tenant will be provided with a minimum 24 hours' notice in writing of the intention to force access.

## 7.0 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

7.1 A monthly audit on cases will be carried out by the Senior Customer Services Officer to establish compliance with associated procedures and ongoing actions are planned in accordance with those procedures.

7.2 On a quarterly basis, the Board will be presented with information on damp and mould cases received in the quarter and progress against agreed KPI's. This information is included within the quarterly performance report.

7.3 This information will also be used to form a pro-active approach when prioritising future investment programmes, in particular in relation to planned stonework repairs and installation of external / internal insulation cladding.

## 8.0 TRAINING.

- 8.1 All customer service staff should be provided with training on how to effectively deal with complaints of damp and mould to ensure the issue is properly dealt with in a timeous manner.
- 8.2 All customer service staff, particularly those who may enter tenants' homes or respond to repair requests, should be trained to identify damp and mould and understand the organisation's policies and processes for responding to it.
- 8.3 Staff who are likely to respond to reports of damp and mould must be trained and appropriately equipped to assess the issue (including safe use of PPE), identify the root cause, and respond appropriately.

## **9.0 TENANT COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION.**

- 9.1 The organisation will provide tenants with information about everyday activities such as: cooking, leaving clothes to dry in rooms and on radiators and taking hot showers that can cause condensation which can lead to dampness and the growth of mould. A damp & mould information leaflet is made available on our website, this information will also be summarised at least once a year through our Newsletter.
- 9.2 The organisation will encourage tenants to report concerns around damp and mould as soon as they notice a problem arising.
- 9.3 The organisation will provide tenants with information on the risks of living with mould and damp, how to identify and report these issues, what steps the landlord will take to address the problem and expected timescales for completion of remedial works.
- 9.5 Tenant information should be clear, easy to understand and accessible for all tenants. This may require a range of communication methods such as email, text, leaflets and tenant newsletters.

## **10.0 TENANT SUPPORT**

- 10.1 Once all damp and mould issues have been diagnosed, discounted or resolved, there may be need for further intervention to provide support, advice and assistance to the tenant(s) concerned. This may include:
- A referral to social work services if tenant has any vulnerabilities and are not already in receipt of support.

- A referral to our Tenancy Sustainment Officer and / or referral to our partners at Community Links Energy Advice for assistance with money and fuel poverty advice
- Addressing any overcrowding issues with housing option advice offered to the tenant

## **11.0 COMPLAINTS**

- 11.1 Although we are committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where you may not be satisfied with the service you have received from us. We value all complaints and use this information to help us improve our services. Our Complaints Policy describes our complaints procedure and how to make a complaint.
- 11.2 If a tenant remains unsatisfied in our management of the damp & mould case, tenants will be provided with information on our complaint's procedures. If they are not satisfied with the organisation's response details on how to escalate the complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman will be provided
- 11.3 All complaints are reviewed to assess what went wrong, and as a result make changes where needed to policies, procedures, and staff behaviour to ensure they continually improve their performance.

## **12.0 DATA PROTECTION**

- 12.1 We will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in our Customer Fair Processing Notice.

## **13.0 REVIEW**

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed by the Board every 3 years or earlier if required.

## **14.0 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

- 14.1 We are committed to promoting an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination by providing equality of opportunity for all. This is reflected in our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

