

# Damp & Mould Policy

DAMP & MOULD POLICY	
<b>Purpose</b>	To ensure that all staff and residents are aware, understand and are equipped with information to identify and raise awareness of any possible issues of damp or condensation in our homes.
<b>Applies to</b>	All Harrison Housing Employees, Trustees, Contractors, Consultants, Volunteers, Residents and their Visitors.
<b>Date first implemented</b>	December 2024
<b>Author</b>	Asset Manager
<b>Date first approved by Leadership Team</b>	December 2024
<b>Date first approved by Board of Trustees</b>	December 2024
<b>Review Frequency</b>	Every 3 Years or if significant changes to the organisation, legislative change, or serious incident.
<b>Service Area</b>	Asset Management
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CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS (made prior to full policy revision)		
Amendment Date	Nature of Amendment	Revised by

VERSION HISTORY			
Revision Date	Version No.	Revised by	Approved by

CURRENT POLICY REVISION	
<b>Date revised</b>	November 2024
<b>Revised by</b>	Asset Manager
<b>LT approval date</b>	December 2024
<b>Board of Trustees Approval date</b>	December 2024
<b>Next revision due</b>	December 2027

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Harrison Housing (HH) is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our residents, staff and others who may be affected by damp, mould and condensation in homes that we own or manage.
- 1.2 We will ensure that the organisation's assets are protected, and homes are fit for human habitation, while ensuring residents live in a safe home.
- 1.3 The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that all HH staff and residents are aware, understand and are equipped with information to identify and raise awareness of any possible issues of damp or condensation in our homes. We will then take a pro-active approach to ensure that these occurrences are minimised or eliminated wherever possible.
- 1.4 This policy relates to all properties and communal areas owned and/ or managed by HH.

## 2. Policy Aims

- 2.1 The policy is designed to meet the following aims:
  - Ensure that all residents live in a safe and habitable environment.
  - Comply with relevant statutory and regulatory obligations.
  - Provide clarity on our overall approach to damp, mould and condensation.
  - Ensure that we are delivering a consistent service to our customers.
  - Treat customers reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy and provide support where required.
  - Respond effectively to individual reports of damp and mould, focusing on identifying the cause to implement the right solution.
  - Ensure staff are appropriately trained.
  - Set out our proactive approach to deal with wider issues around damp, mould and condensation.
  - Provide assurance to our stakeholders that our approach to damp and mould is appropriate and effective.
  - Communicate with our customers who are involved in this process to ensure they are fully aware of the steps throughout and quickly respond if things go wrong.

### 3. Implementation

- 3.1 All staff will be made aware of this policy through Harrison Housing's internal communication channels, including email.
- 3.2 Changes to this policy and its associated procedure, if applicable, will be communicated to all staff.
- 3.3 All staff will be required to read this policy, and to confirm that they have read and understood it.
- 3.4 This policy will be published to residents through our website.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

**The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that HH adheres to this Damp & Mould Policy.**

**Damp and mould cases are monitored via the KPI which are reported to the Board of Trustees quarterly.**

- 4.1 The Asset Manager will have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2 As the approach to damp, mould and condensation is a collective organisational responsibility, the following areas of the business are responsible for different tasks:
- 4.3 The Assets Team is responsible for undertaking stock condition surveys of properties to understand the condition and their investment needs. As part of this programme of 100% stock condition surveys, they will identify any hazards in relation to damp and mould under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- 4.4 The Assets team are responsible for commissioning any specialist damp and mould surveys to properties by trained surveyors. In addition, they are responsible for accurately diagnosing and recording the issues and, where appropriate, implementing any actions to remedy the situation. This can include: carrying out major works or damp proof course (DPC) works; completing minor repair works; and offering guidance and support for customers, including how to operate systems within their home that will reduce the risk of damp, mould or condensation.
- 4.5 The Housing Team will report to the Assets Team any incidence or suspected incidence of damp and mould found on site.

- 4.6 All HH staff will receive training in relation to damp and mould and the signs to look out for.
- 4.7 HH residents are responsible for reporting any issues regarding damp, mould and condensation, and repairs that are the responsibility of HH as soon as reasonably possible. Residents are also responsible for taking on board any advice given by HH housing staff. Customers are also required to provide access to their homes in accordance with their licence agreement.

## **5. Legislation and Guidance**

- 5.1 HH will deliver a service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure the health, safety and security of people and property are maintained at all times.
- 5.2 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) provides The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from 2012 including 'The Home Standard'.
- 5.3 The key areas of legislation in this policy are:
- Defective Premises Act 1972 (Section 4)
  - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
  - Building Regulations Act 1984
  - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
  - Housing Act 2004
  - Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
  - Decent Homes Standard 2006
  - Equality Act 2010
  - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
  - Data Protection Act 2018
  - Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
  - Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 - Awaab's Law

## 6. Damp Causes

- 6.1 There are four main causes of damp and mould in homes in England. It is important to understand the difference between them because they each need different solutions.
- 6.2 **Water leaks:** From either a defective supply and waste pipework (especially in bathrooms and kitchens), which can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings, or through actions of our customers.
- 6.3 **Rising damp:** Movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action.
- 6.4 **Penetrating damp:** Water penetrating the exterior of a structure or internal leaks causing damage to the internal surfaces or structure.
- 6.5 **Condensation:** Moisture held in warm air coming into contact with cold surfaces, subsequently condensing and causing water droplets.

## 7. Reporting Damp, Mould and Condensation

- 7.1 Residents should in the first instance report any issues with damp and mould to their Scheme Manager or to the main office (where there is no Scheme Manager).

## 8. Property Surveys

- 8.1 All properties with reported issues relating to damp, mould and/or condensation will receive a dedicated property inspection from our surveyor.

## 9. Remedial Actions

- 9.1 Following the property survey, there are a number of remedial actions that can be taken to alleviate any issues:
- Advice and support offered to residents.
  - Minor repairs to be raised, such as repairing extractor fans.
  - Major works to be raised, such as damp-proof courses.

## 10. Decants

- 10.1 Depending on the diagnosis, complexity, and scale of the works, it may be identified it is in the best interests of the resident to be decanted from the property for the duration of the works.

- 10.2 Residents will be supported by their Scheme Manager and the Housing Manager if this is required.

## **11. Quality Inspection and Follow-up Visits**

- 11.1 We will inspect any major works, both during and at completion, before we take handover of the property.
- 11.2 We will then contact you to ensure that the remedial works have been successful.
- 11.3 Residents are encouraged to report any concerns they have following the works.

## **12. Staff Training and Awareness**

- 12.1 Surveyors hold relevant qualifications which enable them to diagnose damp issues and suggest appropriate remedies. Where this is not available in house, we will employ specialist damp surveyors.
- 12.2 All frontline staff are trained on damp, mould, and condensation awareness.

## **13. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

- 13.1 For Harrison Housing, diversity is about respecting people's individual differences and ensuring that all people that come into contact with us have access to the same high standards of behaviour and service.
- 13.2 We are committed to ensuring that no resident or team member will be treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics.