



Damp, Condensation and Mould Policy 2023 - 2026

Last reviewed [\[October 2023\]](#)

Damp, Condensation and Mould Policy 2023 - 2026

Overview

This policy is managed and adhered to by the housing service. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with government legislation, guidance and good practice.

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1.1 Introduction

Condensation and mould in a property are generally caused by a fault with the building (i.e. the landlord's responsibility) or how the building is used by the occupier (i.e. the tenant's responsibility). This policy sets out broadly how the Council will address the issues of damp and condensation, and the resulting mould that occurs.

The Council will respond to these issues in accordance with relevant policy and legislation and will work with residents where mould is present to identify the solutions to this problem. Some of the identified solutions will be for the Council to manage and some will be for residents to implement.

The Council will continue improving the condition of its homes through targeted investment, whilst also taking advantage of external funding to improve the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of a property and the subsequent thermal comfort of our social housing stock.

1.2 Aim(s) of the policy:

The policy aims to assist in the delivery of a service that will be able to:

- Ensure we provide and maintain dry, healthy homes for our tenants.
- Focus on working in partnership with our tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is provided.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp.
- Ensure that our tenants have access to and/or are provided with advice and guidance on managing and controlling condensation and mould.

- Ensure that the fabric of the Council's property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.
- To utilise the external funding available to support the investment in the Council's stock, improve the EPC ratings and reduce the heating costs for residents.

With the continued commitment to training and collation of data, the Council will ensure that our teams and our contractor's operatives are able to:

- Spot signs of condensation, damp and mould and understand the causes and remedies of these.
- Carry out preventative maintenance to reduce the occurrence of damp and mould.
- Understand our stock and the archetypes of properties that are likely to suffer from damp and mould.
- Make sure that appropriate budget levels are assigned to reducing the cause of damp and mould.



Section 1

Policy Overview

1.3 Links to the Council's corporate aims:

This policy supports the council's priorities, which are set out in the ['Vision and priorities - corporate plan 2020-2025'](#), in particular:

- A clean, safe and enjoyable environment
- Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need
- Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery
- Climate and Ecological Emergency - working to deliver net zero carbon.

1.4 Equality and diversity

- The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all applicants and Tenants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination.

1.5 Policy Statement

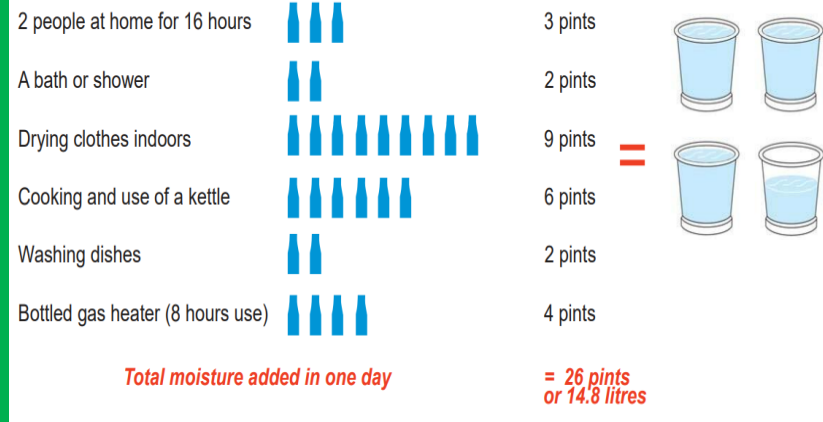
This policy covers how the Council's housing team and tenants can work jointly to control, manage and remediate damp. This includes:

- All housing properties that are tenanted and communal areas, it also includes emergency and temporary accommodation.
- Identifying the types of damp.
- Identifying the council's responsibilities for dealing with damp and condensation.
- Offering guidance, advice and assistance throughout the process to tenants living in council properties or council provided temporary and emergency accommodations.

1.6 Emergency Restrictions

The Council is required to respond to any local or national restrictions imposed by central government. The administration of this and other Council policies could, therefore, be impacted by a pandemic or other emergency for the period that such restrictions are in operation.

Did You Know?



Section 2

Approach and Responsibilities

2.1 The Council's Responsibilities: For the Homes we Own

We will investigate to determine the cause of damp, mould and condensation and carry out remedial repairs and actions in accordance with the tenancy agreement, including:

- We will take the concern seriously, assess the issue with urgency to identify its severity, and strive to identify and tackle the underlying causes promptly.
- If classed as urgent we will respond and inspect your property within 48 hours. All non-urgent works will be inspected within 7 days.
- Vulnerable people: elderly, disabled, pregnant and those with children under 5 will be prioritised.
- We will promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage damp and condensation.
- We complete any remedial works/ measures within a reasonable timescale. The timescale will depend on the severity and urgency of the problem and on the complexity of the solution and the remedial works required:
- We will ensure that remedial work for the treatment of damp, mould or condensation on empty properties is undertaken before being let to new tenants.

2.2 External and Internal checks

Several internal and external checks can be made to identify the sources of damp and mould.

External checks:

- Damaged or blocked pipes, gutters or downpipes
- Broken seals around windows or ill-fitting windows that do not close fully.
- visible structural or facade defects, such as cracks in render or the foundation, missing or broken roof finishes
- Bridged (compromised) damp proof course.

Internal checks:

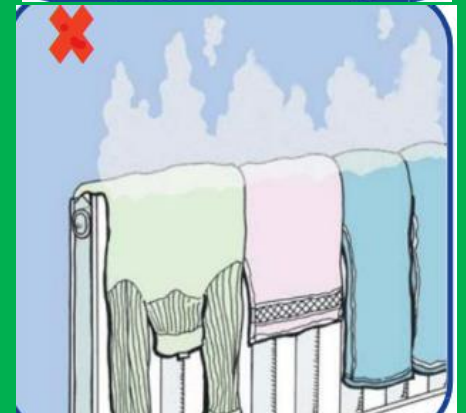
- Peeling wallpaper
- visible damp or staining
- visible condensation
- defective plaster
- consistently high relative humidity, as assessed using a moisture meter or environmental monitors
- low levels of loft or wall insulation
- low internal wall temperature
- damaged, blocked, absent or switched off mechanical ventilation (for example, extractors in kitchens and bathrooms)
- ineffective or broken heating systems

2.3 Tenant Responsibilities

The tenant's responsibilities include:

- The tenant's responsibilities include reporting to the Council evidence of rising and penetrating damp, and faulty equipment that will hamper the management and control of damp and condensation (e.g. faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating etc.)

- Keep the house well ventilated e.g. opening windows when cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan is working if applicable, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.
- Tenant management of condensation and small amounts of mould should not be a substitute for assessing and addressing the underlying issue, which should always be the priority.
- The tenant should regularly check for mould and clean signs of mould as soon as they are discovered.
- Allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of remedial works.



Section 2 Approach and Responsibilities

2.4 Leaseholders

Leaseholders shall manage and maintain their properties including damp and condensation in accordance with their lease agreement. The Council do not carry out damp and condensation remedial works to leasehold properties unless covered by the lease.

Any neglect by the leaseholder to manage or carry out repairs for which they are responsible for and where this has a direct impact on the condition of a Council owned property will be dealt with in accordance with the lease.

2.5 Private Rented Sector

Where the Council assists with placing an applicant into the private rented sector the Council will provide support and assistance that may involve carrying out a site inspection, identifying the cause of the damp and condensation and notifying the landlord of the findings.

If the landlord does not respond in a satisfactory manner further support will be provided and legal advice will be sought.

Landlords in the private rented sector should:

- Engage with The Council's private rented housing team who will provide advice on issues with damp and mould.
- consult experts who can support in assessing risk, where relevant who can identify and tackle a damp and mould problem.
- signpost tenants who might be struggling to keep their properties warm to organisations that might be able to support those who are at increased risk from the health harms of damp and mould.

Section 3 Understanding damp and mould

3.0 Understanding damp and mould:

Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property. It can affect the fabric of the building such as walls, floors, ceilings and foundations. It can also affect home furnishings and belongings such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture and clothing. In addition to causing damage, damp can also lead to the growth of mould and can occur in homes for a variety of reasons.

Irrespective of the type of damp, the Council will support our tenants with issues related to damp and mould, and where necessary instruct qualified professionals who can identify and tackle a damp and mould problem.

3.1 Types of Damp

Condensation

This is the most common form of damp.

Condensation happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings. For example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes.

Condensation related damp normally shows as water on the windows and black mould on walls and ceilings. A lack of space around possessions and storage that prevents air flow through the property will promote the growth of this mould.

In most cases simply wiping the area with a dry cloth on a daily basis will prevent the growth of mould.

Rising Damp

This where there is a movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action.

Penetrating Damp (including internal leaks)

This is where water penetrates the external structure of the building or internal leaks that cause damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure.

Traumatic damp

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water tanks inside the building.

Mould

Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

Properties can have multiple causes of mould simultaneously, sometimes this can only be determined after initial works raised have not worked as expected.



Section 4

Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following strategies, policies and other documents:

- [Vision and priorities - corporate plan 2020-2025'](#)
- [The corporate strategy](#)
- [Corporate risk register?](#)
- [Repairs handbook](#)
- [Health and safety policy?](#)
- [Regulator of Social Housing findings on Damp and Mould](#)
- [Condensation leaflet](#)
- [Damp and mould action plan?](#)

Section 5

Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- The Housing Act, 1985
- The Equality Act, 2010
- The Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993
- The Housing Act 1996
- Homes (Fitness for Human habitation) Act 2018.
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 Section 11 - Repairs and Maintenance.
- Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating.
- Decent Homes standards.
- Awaabs Law
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023