

Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

DESIGN HEADER TO INCLUDE POLICY NAME AND DATE RANGE

INFORMATION

Policy Name	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
Effective Date(s)	March 2022
Approved By	Risk and Compliance Group
Approval Date	14 March 2022
Policy Owner/Dept	Asset Strategy
Policy Author	Ryan Appleby, Head of Asset Strategy
Review Date	March 2024
Version Number	V1.0

Version Control

Version	Date	Changes	Approver

Your Housing Group Strategic Priorities			
Safe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Viability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landlord	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>
People	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant National Standards or Regulation	<p>Please State if the Policy aligns to any of the Regulators Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and Financial Viability Standard • Value for Money Standard • Rent Standard • Home Standard • Tenancy Standard • Neighbourhood and Community Standard • Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
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Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defective Premises Act 1972 (s4) • Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, Section 11 – Repairs and Maintenance • Environmental; Protection Act 1990 (s79 Statutory Notice) • Housing Act 2004 which introduced the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) • Equality Act 2010 • Building Regulations 2013 : Approved Document C (Site preparation and resistance to contaminants and moisture) • Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
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1. Purpose of the Policy

a) This policy details Your Housing Group’s (YHG’s) approach to how the risk of damp and condensation is managed and how YHG will respond to reports of damp and condensation within its portfolio, received by customers, or which become apparent to YHG staff as part of their daily duties. Such occurrences of damp and condensation can lead to mould growth and subsequent detriment to YHG’s assets and customers. YHG will aim to proactively manage the risk through:

- Cyclical surveying of its stock
- Reactive repairs
- Planned preventative investment
- Providing information and guidance to customers

b) It is important that causes of damp and condensation are diagnosed and understood to effectively remediate, this includes a proactive approach to addressing reports and providing relevant information and signposting to customers where appropriate.

c) In addition to providing a safe home environment to our customers, YHG are to comply with all relevant legislation not just restricted to such legislation identified herein this policy.

Aims

- To provide clear lines of responsibility within YHG for the management of damp and condensation related issues
- To specify individual responsibilities in the management of damp and condensation
- To clarify the approach to damp and condensation
- To clarify the method of reviewing and monitoring damp and condensation reporting
- To establish a clear, accessible process to enable customers to report damp and condensation issues

- To tailor responses to ensure the individual needs of customers are taken into consideration
- To maintain a safe environment for customers and employees within all YHG properties, and for the prevention of potential damage to YHG's assets.
- To provide assurance to YHG that measures are in place to identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with damp and condensation.

2. Scope of the Policy

- a) This document should be used by all employees, customers and stakeholders of YHG to understand the obligations placed upon YHG to maintain a safe environment for their customers and employees within the homes of each customer and within all buildings.
- b) This policy applies to all buildings within YHG's portfolio where YHG have the responsibility to maintain the asset.

3. Consultation

- a) The Director of Asset and Building Safety and the Head of Asset Strategy and Planning have prepared this policy with input from representatives from the Housing Management Team and wider Asset Management Team.
- b) As part of the development of this Policy and in line with the Home Standard consultation, a review by the Customer Connect panel will be undertaken. This policy is also subject to review by the Customer Services Committee before publication.
- c) As part of the development of this Policy, a review by customer representatives via a focus group will be undertaken. The outputs of that review will be considered to shape the policy before publication.

4. Background and Context

- a) Mould and damp are caused by excess moisture. Moisture in buildings can be caused by leaking pipes, rising damp in basements or ground floors, or rain seeping in because of damage to the fabric of the building, roof or around window frames.

A newly built home may be damp if the water used when building it is still drying out – for example, in the plaster on the walls. Excess moisture indoors can also be caused by condensation.

If you have mould or damp it is important to find out why you have excess moisture in your home. When you know what's causing the damp, you can make sure your home is repaired or take steps to limit the moisture in the air.

- b) Damp and Mould related health outcomes may affect people regardless of age or current health; the elderly and children are most at risk.
- c) The main types of Damp are:
- Rising Damp – movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action
 - Penetrating Damp – water penetrating the external of a structure or internal leaks causing damage to the internal surfaces or structure
 - Condensing Damp – moisture held in warm air coming into contact with cold surfaces, subsequently condensing and causing water droplets
- d) Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. It is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present.
- e) Poor housing conditions can result in frequent absence from work and/or school due to ill-health, resulting in under-achievement and attaining less earning power.
- f) In October 2021 the Housing Ombudsman issued a report to social landlords, recommending that they adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould. The report recognised the challenges for landlords tackling these issues, and identified best practice and 26 items for landlords to implement including:
- Greater use of intelligence and data to prevent issues
 - Adopting a consolidated policy for actions it may be take based on diagnosis
 - Reviewing communication with residents to improve tone
 - Improve access to complaints to resolve issues, including alongside disrepair claims, and learn from them
- g) The Social Housing White Paper published in November 2020 also set out a number of expectations placed upon social landlords, a number of these themes are appropriate to this policy, including:
- To know how your landlord is performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so you can hold it to account.
 - To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong ombudsman who will give you swift and fair redress when needed
 - To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants
 - To have your voice heard by your landlord, for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its board.
 - The government will provide access to help, if you want it, for you to learn new skills to ensure your landlord listens
 - To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair

5. Policy Detail

YHG are committed to:

- a) offering advice and assistance to customers living in our properties, including information on thermal comfort and preventing condensation, such as engaging with YHG's Money Advice Team for customers who are being subjected to potential fuel poverty.
- b) complying with legal and regulatory requirements.
- c) Implementing arrangements designed to ensure that:
 - suitable and sufficient response to initial reports of damp or condensation.
 - YHG will identify the cause of damp occurring in its property and order remedial works where required within set repair categories, including advice and assistance to the Customer where there is condensation present.
 - there is increased awareness for Customers through communication and information on how to combat condensation
 - there are adequate levels of basic damp and condensation awareness and staff competency through effective training programmes.
 - there is adequate review of damp and condensation performance information within YHG Assets to inform targeted interventions such as information campaigns.
 - Components are installed as part of the responsive repairs and maintenance service and planned investment programmes are cost effective and meet sustainability and affordability criteria

6. Responsibilities under this Policy

Landlord Responsibilities

- a) Within legislation YHG as a landlord are responsible for keeping the structure of our assets in good repair in addition to maintaining heating, sanitation and service installations. YHG is responsible for those installations that are fitted by us, or which have been adopted by us.
- b) Ensure diagnosis and repairs are ordered aligned with those detailed in YHG's Repairs & Maintenance Policy:

Category	Response Time
Emergency	Within 24 Hours
Routine	Within 21 Calendar Days
Major & Planned	Within 63 Calendar Days

Customer Responsibilities

- c) The Customer is responsible for ensuring no damage occurs to YHG Assets in line with their responsibilities as detailed within their tenancy agreement. As such, customers will be provided with information and guidance on minimising condensation in their home.

7. Risk Management

- a) The risks of not following this policy are that we will not comply with the requirements of legislation detailed in the Housing Act 2004 and the Landlord and Customer Act 1985.

8. Data Protection, Record Storage and Retention

- a) This policy complies with the principles of GDPR and YHG's Data Protection Policy, any personal information relating to customers affected by this policy will be stored on YHG systems which are compliant with GDPR.

9. Equality and Diversity

- a) As part of the development of this Policy, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken. The outputs of that review will be considered to shape the policy before publication.
- b) This Policy will be applied in a way which ensures equality of treatment for all customers without discrimination, or victimisation on account of any protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010. In developing this policy YHG has considered its public sector equality duties under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, namely the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- c) The policy pays regard to diversities around access to and delivery of any services.
- d) An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken on this policy and copies of the EIAs are available upon request.
- e) On request YHG will provide translations of all its documents, policies and procedures in various languages and formats including computer disc, braille, large print and tape.

10. Communication

- a) This policy is available to view by all customers on the YHG website and will be updated with any changes.
- b. Internally this policy will be viewable and accessible by all staff and stored on the group's intranet site Youggle.

11. Learning and Development

- a) All staff of the Asset Maintenance Service and Housing Management Team will be required to ensure this policy is read in line with their duties and responsibilities.

12. Performance Management of this Policy

- a) Performance will be reported to Board to demonstrate the compliance with the Decent Homes Standard.

13. Review of this Policy

- a) This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by statutory, regulatory, best practice, emerging developments, or circumstances arising from reviews of other Group wide policies.
- b) The policy will be reviewed by the Head of Asset Strategy & Planning.

Related Documents

Document Type	Name
Connected Policies and Procedures	Asset Management Strategy Asset Compliance Policy Repairs Policy
Forms and Letters	
Leaflets/Publicity Material	https://www.yourhousinggroup.co.uk/media/2474/yhg-1066-yhg-damp-mould-flyer-final.pdf
Training Materials Available	Mandatory Read - Damp, Mould and Condensation Awareness video - Youggie (interactgo.com)
Intranet/ Website Page	Damp and Mould (yourhousinggroup.co.uk)

Checklist

(To be completed as far as possible by the Policy Author before submission for quality checking by Research and Policy Manager prior to Risk and Compliance Group)

Policy Name: Damp, Mould & Condensation	
Version No: 1	Effective Date: April 2022
Status: New Policy	
Previous Policy Name N/A	
Brief Summary of Changes from Previous Version: N/A	
Internal Consultation Groups: Asset Management Housing Management Fix360 Customer Focus Group Customer Consultation Committee	Customer Consultation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Date of Customer Consultation: 24/01/2022 Customer Consultation Brief Details: Policy had been shared with participants in advance of the meeting. Session was facilitated by the Customer Engagement Team on 24th January, with 1 hour dedicated to the focus group. Focus group over MS Teams, was attended by 2 staff with contributions from 5 customers in person and via email. The Head of Asset Strategy and Planning presented a short presentation about the service area and main points around the policy. Participants heard the presentations and were invited to ask questions and provide feedback based on their review of the policy and their own views and experiences. All questions raised on the day were answered.
Link to Consultation Document(s):	
Date Initial Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: n/a	Equality Impact Assessor name(s): Danielle McCann, Carly-Anne Greenall, Adele Duffy
Reason for Decision: n/a	
Date Full Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: 20/01/2022	
Brief Outline of any Changes Recommended from EIA: Leaflet mentioned – this needs to be age appropriate Review with OPS and YPS / possible attendance at Scheme Your Voice meetings. Leaflet – needs to be readily available/ all client groups and be available in braille / large print Review with teams Leaflet – needs to be reflective of other languages – tung sing etc Translate in a timely manner People on poverty line – how do we support these people as they cannot afford to heat their homes. dd signposting and referral to Money Advice teams General comment re as per the damage element 6B – reference damage as per the tenancy agreement. Reference required re timelines – or reference in line with the Repairs timeframes and what our obligations are.	
Data Protection/ GDPR Implications: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Brief Outline of Data Protection/GDPR Implications:	

Legal Implications: <input type="checkbox"/>	Legal Panel Consulted: <input type="checkbox"/>		Date:	
Risk Implications: <input type="checkbox"/>	Risk Logged on Datix: <input type="checkbox"/>		Date:	
Resource Implications	People: <input type="checkbox"/>	Finance: <input type="checkbox"/>	Asset: <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>
Brief Summary of how Resource Implications have been addressed:				
How will communication on this Policy take place: (please delete as appropriate)				
Intranet/ YHG Website				
Policy Owner: (Department) Asset			Policy Author: Head of Asset Strategy	
Policy Signed Off by: (service manager or sponsor): Director of Asset & Building Safety			Date: 07/02/22	
Policy Quality Checked by: Research and Policy Manager			Date: 07/02/22	
Policy Approved by Risk and Compliance Group:			Date: 14/03/22	