



Places to live. Space to grow.

Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

CONTENTS

Where to find the information you need

Introduction and purpose	1
Policy statement	2
Scope	3
Legislative and regulatory context	4
Landlord responsibilities	5
Resident responsibilities	6
Vulnerabilities and safeguarding	7
Prevention and early intervention	8
Monitoring, reporting and governance	9
Communication	10

1 Introduction: the purpose of this policy

- 1.1 This policy supports compliance with Awaab's Law (introduced under the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023) and details West Kent's approach to investigating and resolving damp and mould in our homes within the prescribed timescales.
- 1.2 We are committed to ensuring every resident lives in a safe, warm and well-maintained home.

2 Policy statement

- 2.1. This policy sets out how we will respond to reports of damp, mould and condensation within our homes, from residents, or which become apparent to staff as part of their daily duties.
- 2.2. Our promise when dealing with damp, mould and condensation:
 - Have an embedded zero tolerance culture to the occurrence of damp and mould and condensation across West Kent
 - Build trust and confidence – no blame and no shame in our response
 - Ensure health and wellbeing – understand our residents needs
 - Governance – performance reporting to the Executive Team and Board, learning from complaints/faults and being accountable to residents.
- 2.3. It is important that causes of damp, mould and condensation are diagnosed and understood to effectively fix the problem. This includes a proactive approach to addressing reports, providing relevant information, and signposting to residents where appropriate.
- 2.4. This policy should be used by all employees, residents, contractors and stakeholders of West Kent. It has been written to explain the responsibilities placed on West Kent to maintain a safe environment for our residents and employees within all homes and buildings.

3 Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to all buildings within West Kent's portfolio where West Kent has the responsibility to maintain the asset including temporary accommodation - it does not apply to shared owners or leaseholders.
- 3.2. Where West Kent is the landlord to a resident but not the freeholder or responsible for building repairs, we will still comply with Awaab's Law by investigating all reports of damp and mould. We will immediately notify and formally request action from the freeholder or managing agent, monitor progress, and maintain communication with the resident throughout.

- 3.3. Although responsibility for completing works may rest with the freeholder, West Kent retains overall responsibility for ensuring the issue is resolved and the home is safe. Where delays occur, we will consider interim measures or legal options to ensure compliance.

4 Legislative and regulatory context

- 4.1. This policy supports compliance with:

- Awaab's Law (Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023)
- Housing Act 2004
- Decent Home Standard including Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

5 Landlord responsibilities

- 5.1 We accept full responsibility to investigate, diagnose and resolve all reports of damp and mould.
- 5.2. We will treat every report seriously and investigate regardless of the perceived cause and triage each case into the following categories:
- Emergency – imminent and significant risk of harm
 - Significant – serious risk to health
 - Routine repair – damp and mould does not pose a risk to health and falls outside of Awaab's Law.
- 5.3. Our triage process considers that some of our residents are at greater risk from the effects of damp and mould due to vulnerabilities and will require a quicker response in line with the requirements of Awaab's Law.

We will respond to all cases of damp and mould within the following timescales.

Emergency

- We will attend and make safe or decant within 24 hours.

Significant

- We will inspect within 10 working days.

- We will make safe or decant within 5 working days of the inspection. The day reported is counted as day 0
- We will begin further works within 5 working days of investigation or as soon as possible within 12 weeks.

Summary of outcomes

- 5.4. Where triage has initially identified that a case is either Emergency or Significant a Written Summary of Outcomes will be provided to the resident, ensuring they are informed about next steps being taken to remove mould and address any underlying issues with given timescales.

This will be provided even where the result of the inspection determines that the hazard is outside of Awaab's Law.

The summary of outcomes will include:

- Whether a hazard was identified
- Required actions
- Estimated timescales
- Contact information for further information

We will also:

- Inspect the property and carry out remedial works within the statutory period
- Provide interim measures if residents are at risk such as dehumidifiers, mould treatment, considerations for alternative accommodation.
- Maintain accurate records of all cases, inspections, works and communications
- Review and sign off all cases to ensure the home is safe and the issue is resolved.

Third party management

- 5.5. Where West Kent is not the freeholder of the property and third-party management companies are in place to carry out repairs and maintenance, West Kent will work with them to ensure regulations are met. Escalation of cases not being addressed in accordance with legislation will result in us attending to damp and mould cases and potentially recharging the costs back to the freeholders/managing agents.

6 Resident responsibilities

- 6.1 Resident responsibilities are set out in tenancy agreements. When a resident moves into their home, guidance and advice will be provided by West Kent. Further information is provided in the tenancy handbook and on our [website](#).

6.2. We recognise that tackling damp and mould requires a shared approach between West Kent and our residents. Whilst we have a clear duty under Awaab's Law to investigate and resolve all reports within the statutory timeframe, residents also have an important role to play in helping us maintain a healthy home.

Residents are asked to:

- Report any signs of damp, mould, leaks or condensation as soon as they appear.
- Work with us to agree suitable times for inspections, surveys or repair visits.
- Use heating and ventilation systems as intended, including extractor fans, trickle vents and mechanical ventilation systems.
- Keep air vents and windows clear and avoid blocking circulation routes to allow for good ventilation.
- Residents should wash down any water condensation forming on areas such as windows and doors to help prevent the risk of mould forming in these areas.
- Follow any advice or guidance provided by our officers on reducing condensation and prevent reoccurrence.
- Residents must allow access for us to carry out all inspections and resulting works relating to damp and mould, if access is not given, we will follow our no access process.

6.3. We recognise that not all residents have equal means to heat or ventilate their home and that some circumstances may make this difficult. Our approach is non-judgemental and supportive. Where vulnerability or financial hardship is identified, we will work with residents to provide additional advice and support or referrals to other services. We have a Communities Hub through which residents experiencing fuel poverty can seek advice and support.

6.4. All reports will be investigated regardless of the perceived cause. We will not attribute blame to residents and will always take action to identify and remove the source of damp and mould.

7 Vulnerabilities and safeguarding

7.1. We recognise that damp and mould disproportionately affect children, older people and those with respiratory conditions or other vulnerabilities.

7.2. Our staff and contractors will:

- Apply professional curiosity during every visit, ensuring that they look out for signs of damp, mould or condensation.
- Consider vulnerabilities and refer concerns through safeguarding or tenancy support.

- Escalate cases where health may be affected to ensure urgent action.
- Where needed, we will liaise with health professionals or partner agencies to ensure the resident's wellbeing.

8 Prevention and early intervention

8.1 We will take a proactive approach to preventing damp and mould through:

- Five yearly stock condition surveys.
- Planned investment programme.
- Providing information and guidance to residents to support them in maintaining a healthy home.
- Monitoring themes and trends with cases of damp, mould and condensation and complete lessons learnt on complaints.
- The use of environmental sensors or thermal imaging where appropriate.
- Education and training to relevant staff to recognise and report signs of damp and mould.

9 Monitoring, reporting and governance

9.1 Performance against this policy will be monitored through:

- Compliance with our Decent Home Standard
- Number of reported damp and mould cases
- Performance against completions on time.

9.2. Performance will be reported monthly to Executive Team, quarterly to Communities and Housing Committee and annually to Board.

10 Communication

10.1. This policy is available to view by all residents on our website and will be updated with any changes. Internally, this policy will be viewable and accessible by all staff with links in place to the website to maintain version control.