

Damp & Mould Management Policy

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Authorities covered:	Joint
Applies to:	This document applies to all staff working for either Eastbourne Borough Council or Lewes District Council, Homes First and Housing Property Services.
Responsible: (Executive Lead)	Head of Housing Property Services
Accountable: (Operational Lead)	Works Delivery Manager
Consultation:	Tenants have been involved in the formulation of this policy through consultation via the Damp & Mould Scrutiny Group and TOLD & LET.
Approval date:	15 th May 2025
Approved by:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Councillor Peter Diplock, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness – 26/03/20252. Councillor Mark Slater, Cabinet Member for Social Housing and Tenants – 01/04/20253. LET – 13/05/20254. TOLD – 15/05/2025.
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1. Definitions

“Condensation” – water film formed on surfaces where air moisture condenses on colder surfaces.

“Damp” – presence of excess moisture.

“Landlord” – for the purpose of this policy are Lewes District Council (LDC), Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC), Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited (EHICL) and Aspiration Homes Limited Liability Partnership (AHLLP).

“Penetrating damp” - moisture moving from the exterior to interior of the building through a crack or defect in the external building structure.

“Mould” - coating or discoloration in various colours but often yellow and black, caused by fungi that develop in damp atmosphere on the surfaces.

“Rising damp” - upward rising of water through permeable wall or floor structures by capillary action.

“Tenants” – for the purpose of this policy this refers to tenants and leaseholders of the Landlord.

2. General Statement

This policy explains our intention to manage and have an auditable record for the resolution of damp and mould.

The policy reinforces our goal to provide a timely and high-quality repairs service with excellent customer satisfaction and should be read in conjunction with the relevant internal procedures and associated documents.

This document has been written to demonstrate the organisation’s work to comply with the following legislation and guidance;

- Decent Homes Standard
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Housing Act 2004.
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Guidance Issued from the Housing Ombudsman
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Proposed Awaab’s Law
- Safety & Quality Consumer Standard

The policy will be revised as the legislation and guidance evolves and reviewed at least annually.

3. Policy aims and objectives

The policy outlines our approach to managing damp and mould and outlines the level of service tenants can expect after the initial reporting or identification of damp and mould.

The policy sets out the high priority we give to react, track and record any issues with damp and mould within the properties we manage and is informed by the following national guidance:

- Government guidance on the health risks of damp and mould for landlords.¹
- Housing Ombudsman Service Guidance on Damp and Mould.²

4. Our Commitment

We are committed to ensure that tenants are provided with a safe, warm and secure home, that is well maintained.

It is our intention to ensure that tenants can easily report damp and mould through their preferred communication method.

From their first interaction, our tenants will have a known point of contact and be able to get updates and clarity of actions and time scales for actions.

We understand that there are lots of factors that combine to cause damp, condensation and mould. But it is our responsibility as Landlord under the government guidance and proposed Awaab's Law to identify and resolve causes with a "zero tolerance."

We put the health and safety of our tenants first, and that damp and mould is for us to resolve and not a fault caused by household or lifestyle.

In conjunction with physical works to a property structure and services to resolve penetrating and rising damp where appropriate, we will offer practical advice to tenants to help manage airborne moisture that can be the cause of condensation and mould.

It is our intention to respond proactively and prioritise damp and mould to be actioned within the time limits proposed in Awaab's Law.

As set out in the subsequent case management section (Section 9) of this policy we will engage a dedicated internal surveying team and where required external specialist contractors and consultants to diagnose the cause of damp and mould and to carry out required works.

¹ [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK](#)

² [Damp and mould expectations](#)

5. Vulnerable Tenants

In line with our Joint Safeguarding Policy we recognise some tenants are more vulnerable and at greater risk because of damp and mould. We will ensure that when a tenant reports damp and mould, we will proactively ask if a member of the household is vulnerable or at increased risk, including babies, those with health and respiratory conditions, and those with disabilities. Such tenants will be prioritised in accordance with the recommendations made for Awaab's Law to allocate the correct priority for action.

All council staff, contractors and agencies we regularly work with have been asked to report to us any dangerous hazards and repair issues such as damp and mould together with any concerns if tenants have any vulnerabilities, disabilities or health conditions for us to action under this policy.

We will assess the damp and mould risk for the health and safety of the actual tenants of the dwelling and prioritise action accordingly where tenants are at greater risk from their home being affected by damp and mould.

The details of tenant's vulnerabilities will be recorded on the property database system to be considered for correct prioritisation of actions and works.

We will refer vulnerable tenants to Adult and Children Services where they are identified as needing additional support whilst the damp and mould is addressed.

6. Equality and Diversity

In accordance with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and objectives we are committed to providing a service and culture where equality and fairness is integral to everything we do.

When required, we assist tenants in reporting damp and mould by helping them complete paperwork, offering translation services, accommodating and supporting their preferred communication medium.

7. Training and learning

We will ensure that all staff involved in the damp and mould process, and responsible for implementing this policy, have undertaken sufficient training on damp and mould to ensure compliance with this policy. We ask the same of all our contractors and consultants and look to provide training on this, when necessary.

We will use the learning from the damp and mould cases and complaints to continually look to improve our service.

There will be ongoing review of damp and mould Legislation, guidance and lessons learnt from our historic internal damp and mould cases to inform improvements to this policy, and training provided if required. As a minimum, an annual review will be undertaken of this policy to incorporate legislative and regulatory requirements and best practice developments.

8. Reporting damp and mould cases

We will ensure that our tenants can easily report damp and mould issues online, by phone, by letter or other means agreed to our repair helpdesk.

Damp and mould can be reported either by completing our [online form](#) or by calling 01273 471600 (Lewes) and 01323 410000 (Eastbourne).

Where possible we will encourage tenants to send photos of damp and mould to help our quick diagnosis and evaluation action as required.

On receipt of damp and mould issues an immediate assessment will be carried out to:

- assess the damp and mould risk to the health and safety of the tenants, to raise orders, organise inspection, or if a temporary decant is needed.
- check the repairs history to see if a reoccurring issue and a Surveyor inspection is needed to identify the cause and long-term solution to resolve.

9. Recording and Managing damp and mould cases

Where the assessment of the initial call of damp and mould identifies a new issue, a repairs order will be raised with required priority for works required.

We will aim to remove any immediate risk by progressing urgent repair works, including anti fungicidal mould wash and providing dehumidifiers where we will reimburse running costs, within our 1-day emergency and 7-day urgent priority, subject to tenants' availability.

All other damp and mould works will be completed in line with our repair priority time scales.

Tenants will be informed of the priority allocated and a date agreed for morning or afternoon appointment. Where the works order is allocated to the Repairs & Maintenance Contractor; Mears the tenants will receive confirmation via Mears text and reminder day before attendance. For orders allocated to non-Mears contractors, we will email or write to tenants to confirm appointment. All communications are to have clear details of contact in case the tenant needs to rearrange the appointment. If contractors cannot make the appointment, they are to contact the tenants within 48 hours of intended attendance to rearrange the appointment with email or letter confirmation of revised appointment.

All damp and mould issues will be referred to the Works Delivery Team for a Surveyor Inspection if any of the following criteria are met:

- The initial assessment of call identifies technical diagnosis is required to identify the cause of damp and mould,
- A complaint or Acuity customer feedback damp and mould issues have been received,
- Attending contractors report back within two days of their initial attendance to Works Delivery Team a need for technical inspection to diagnose of cause of damp and mould,
- The assessment of historic records identifies a reoccurring damp and mould issue not resolved from previous contractor attendance,
- Surveyors or any other persons identify damp and mould issues need technical diagnosis.

All damp and mould cases will be logged on our system and a physical inspection will be arranged within 14 days of the request.

The damp and mould case will be allocated and managed by a dedicated surveyor for the property.

The surveyor will contact the tenant and:-

- Arrange a mutually agreeable day for survey and confirm in email or by letter.
- Check if members of the household are vulnerable or at increased risk to ensure correct prioritisation of actions and that these details are recorded on property database system.
- Carry out a thorough initial survey and investigation of the whole property to identify the cause of damp and mould, and if the need to engage any required specialist to assist with specialist exploratory investigations or monitoring.
- Record survey details in the Damp and Mould survey template and advise the tenants of agreed action plan before leaving the property.
- If appropriate at or after survey, provide tenants with information and guidance on how they can help better manage air moisture, condensation and related mould.
- Email or send bespoke letter to tenant within two working days after the survey confirming –
 - Date investigation and details of who conducted the survey.
 - Any follow-on investigations required and time scales.
 - Assessed Health and Safety risk and any immediate actions to make safe and long-term actions for permanent resolution with time scales.
 - Confirmed dedicated point of contact details.

Where the investigation identifies significant risk to health and safety, we will start initial works within our 24 hours emergency and 7-day urgent order priorities. If this cannot be achieved for whatever reason, a temporary decant to stay in suitable alternative accommodation until safe to return will be implemented.

The property database notes will be used to provide an auditable record of actions.

All cases will be kept under review until formally closed. Cases will only be closed when post inspection and sign off by the tenant that works have been completed.

Where no access to the property is provided, we will issue three letters looking to agree access. If no response is received, we will work with the housing team to agree if an injunction for access is required.

All closed cases will receive an inspection or call after three months of completion of damp and mould works to confirm there has been no return of damp and mould. Tenants will have dedicated contact details to communicate back at any time if reoccurrence of damp and mould issues.

10. Reporting and auditable records damp and mould cases resolution

We will monitor performance through the following measures: -

- Number cases logged.
- Number cases surveyed within 14 days.
- Number cases closed.
- Damp and mould works completed in required priority time.
- Reporting performance to our Tenant Groups (TOLD & LET) and our Management Team.
- We will invite Tenant Group feedback on the policy at regular intervals and to work with us to ensure that the policy is continually improved based on our customer feedback.
- Under the consumer standard requirements, we should inspect all properties at least every five years. Where an inherent damp and mould issue is known, we will increase the frequency of these inspections through a risk based approach.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with:

- Joint Safeguarding Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy