

Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Policy

Interim Update

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Document Control

Governance

Table 1 – Policy information

Item	Response
Title	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
Responsible officer	Head of Repairs & Maintenance
Author	General Manager, Damp & Disrepair
Approved by	Cabinet tbc
Version approval date	Xx
Next review date	Xx
Review responsibility	Head of Repairs & Maintenance
Applicable to	Homes & Neighbourhoods staff and subcontractors. Homes & Neighbourhoods tenants, leaseholders and other residents.
IIA date	18/11/2025 IIA-762863677
Regulatory framework	Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and associated RSH Regulatory Standards

Revision history

Table 2 – Revision details

Date	Version	Author	Authorised by	Revision details
11/09/24	1.0	NH	Cabinet	First publication.
tbc	1.1	JH	Cabinet tbc	Policy review to align with implementation of Awaab's Law. Format updated to meet Kirklees Council's document accessibility standards.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purposes of this policy

- 1.1.1 The well-being of tenants and residents, along with the structural integrity of homes, can be severely affected by the presence of damp, mould, and condensation (DMC).
- 1.1.2 Kirklees Council has developed this policy to address the management of DMC in council-owned homes and to provide clarity to tenants, residents, staff, and contractors on the council's robust and effective approach to it.
- 1.1.3 The policy sets out the council's consistent approach to protecting residents' safety and wellbeing, ensuring that they are provided with a high-quality, responsive customer experience which is tailored to support their individual needs, and which satisfactorily resolves DMC issues in their homes.
- 1.1.4 The policy also sets out the council's proactive approach to dealing with wider issues around DMC. It outlines the council's responsibilities in relation to completing necessary surveys, repairs and remedial works, and collecting, reviewing, and managing relevant data to prevent future occurrences of DMC and improve services for tenants.

1.2 Legal context

- 1.2.1 This policy responds to the [Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) and the associated [Regulatory Standards](#) by addressing the following requirements:

Safety and Quality Standard

- Registered providers must have an accurate, up to date and evidenced understanding of the condition of their homes that reliably informs their provision of good quality, well maintained and safe homes for tenants.
- Registered providers must ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's [Decent Homes Guidance](#) and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard unless exempted by the regulator.
- When acting as landlords, registered providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of tenants in their homes and associated communal areas.
- Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible.
- Registered providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services.

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

- Registered providers must treat tenants with fairness and respect.

- In relation to the housing and landlord services they provide, registered providers must take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants.
- 1.2.2 This policy also supports Kirklees Council in complying with the following legislation and guidance:
- Defective Premises Act 1972 (Section 4)
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Building Regulations Act 1984
 - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
 - Housing Act 2004
 - Decent Homes Standard 2006
 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) 2006
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
 - Home Standard Regulator of Social Housing 2015
 - Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
 - Pre Action-Protocol for Housing Condition Claims England 2021
 - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
 - Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code 2024
 - [Awaab’s Law: The Hazards in Social Housing \(Prescribed Requirements\) \(England\) Regulations 2025](#)
 - [Awaab’s Law: Guidance for social landlords – Timeframes for repairs in the social rented sector](#)

1.3 General definitions

1.3.1 For the purposes of this policy, the following general definitions apply:

Table 3 – List of definitions used in this policy

Term	Definition
Homes & Neighbourhoods, H&N	Kirklees Council's housing services, inclusive of all departments and teams.
Tenant	A person that rents a home from Homes & Neighbourhoods.
Leaseholder	A person that owns a home on a lease, within a council-owned building.
Resident	Any person that is registered as living in a council-owned home or other building, including tenants, leaseholders and others.
Staff, Officer	A person that works for Kirklees Council.
Contractor	A company or person that works on behalf of Kirklees Council.
Operative	A person carrying out a repair (could be council staff or a contractor).

1.4 DMC definitions

- 1.4.1 **Mould** is a fungus which spreads through spores which can quickly grow on surfaces where dampness persists, or moisture has formed on surfaces. Mould can often look like black, white, or green patches and when it is disturbed it can cause allergic reactions and irritations to people.
- 1.4.2 **Damp** is the presence of unwanted moisture in the structure of a building caused either by the intrusion of water from outside of the building or from internal elements such as leaks or caused by condensation within the structure. Damp can be caused by leaks from plumbing faults, failed appliances and poorly sealed baths and showers, as well as Rising Damp or Penetrating Damp.
- 1.4.3 **Rising Damp** is the movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action and can occur if the damp proof course (DPC) of a property has failed.
- 1.4.4 **Penetrating Damp** is caused by water ingress into properties from the outside. Examples include defective mortar with gaps/holes, broken roof tiles, leaking gutters, blocked drain/gulley, or floods.
- 1.4.5 **Moisture** describes very small drops of water, either in the air or on a surface. Every day activities produce moisture in a property, such as:
- Bathing or showering.
 - Drying clothes indoors.
 - Cooking and boiling a kettle.
 - Washing the dishes; and
 - Breathing, which also has an impact.

For reference, the average two-person household emits around nine litres of water vapour/moisture each day, and that moisture must go somewhere to prevent condensation.

- 1.4.6 **Condensation** is the natural output of the process of moisture in the air meeting cold surfaces like tiles, walls, windows, and worktops, and turns water vapour into liquid, as water droplets. It happens all the time, especially when it's colder outside. When air gets colder, it cannot hold a lot of moisture, so droplets of water may appear near windows or doors, in the corner of rooms, behind cupboards or wardrobes, or on other cold surfaces and in places where there is little movement of air. It mainly occurs during cold weather and it's more likely to happen in homes with more people in them.
- 1.4.7 **Humidity** is a measure of how much water vapour is in the air and a hygrometer can help measure humidity. A relative humidity rating between 40% to 60% on a hygrometer is considered ideal. High levels of humidity are typically recognised when the environment is warm with excessive water vapour in the air.
- 1.4.8 **HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System)** is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. There are 29 hazard categories, including damp and mould.

2 Objectives and scope

2.1 Policy objectives

- 2.1.1 The primary goal of this policy is to ensure that tenants' safety is at the core of service delivery around DMC. The policy has two overarching objectives:
- To ensure that the council's reactive approach to dealing with DMC is consistent and effective; and
 - To reduce and prevent future cases of DMC through a proactive approach.
- 2.1.2 The policy aims to:
- Provide an approach to DMC which focuses on residents as the single most important factor, rather than the buildings.
 - Comply with the relevant and applicable statutory, regulatory, and legislative obligations.
 - Provide clarity on the council's overall approach to damp, mould and condensation, assuring tenants and other stakeholders that our approach to damp and mould is robust and effective.
 - Remove the 'stigma' or negative perception of DMC in people's homes, including the removal of 'blame'.
 - Ensure that the council is delivering a fair and consistent service to residents, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and Homes & Neighbourhoods' Vulnerable Tenant Policy.

- Ensure that residents have access to support, advice and guidance on preventing, treating, and controlling damp, condensation and mould, as well as information on how to report issues to Kirklees Council.
- Focus on working in partnership by interacting with and listening to feedback from residents, staff, and contractors to help improve service delivery.
- Ensure that staff, contractors, and others are aware of, understand, and are equipped with the necessary information to deliver the requirements of our DMC procedures, and that these are adopted and embedded into service delivery.

2.2 Policy scope

- 2.2.1 This policy is applicable to all housing stock owned and/or managed by Kirklees Council, or managed by Pinnacle.
- 2.2.2 The policy is relevant to all stakeholders including residents, all council staff, and contractors reporting instances of damp, mould, and condensation.
- 2.2.3 This policy does not apply to leaseholders. Leaseholders should refer to their leasehold agreement and the Homes & Neighbourhoods Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

3 Policy statement

3.1 Awaab's Law and HHSRS

- 3.1.1 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a risk assessment tool used to assess whether a property is safe to live in. It rates the hazards in homes according to the likely impacts on health. There are twenty-nine different hazards identified in HHSRS, one of which is 'Damp and Mould'.
- 3.1.2 In accordance with Awaab's Law, Homes & Neighbourhoods will respond to reports of potential DMC hazards in tenants' homes as set out below:
 - Investigate any potential emergency hazards and, if the investigation confirms emergency hazards, undertake relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable. The investigation and the emergency safety work must both take place within 24 hours of becoming aware of the hazard.
 - Investigate any potential significant hazards within 10 working days of becoming aware of them.
 - Produce a written summary of investigation findings and provide this to the tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.
 - Undertake relevant safety work within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard.

- Begin, or take steps to begin, any supplementary preventative work to prevent a significant or emergency hazard recurring within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant or emergency hazard. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this must be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks.
 - Satisfactorily complete supplementary preventative works within a reasonable time period.
 - Secure the provision of suitable alternative accommodation for the household, at the social landlord's expense, if relevant safety work cannot be completed within specified timeframes.
 - Keep the tenant updated throughout the process and provide information on how to keep safe.
- 3.1.3 Homes & Neighbourhoods will keep clear records of all attempts to comply with the legislation, including records of all correspondence with the resident(s) and any contractors. If Homes & Neighbourhoods have made all reasonable attempts to comply with the timescales but have been unable to for reasons genuinely beyond their control, they will provide a record of the reasons that prevented them from doing so.

3.2 Working with tenants

- 3.2.1 It is the shared responsibility of tenants, staff, contractors, and other relevant stakeholders to make sure that incidents of damp and mould are reported and acted upon in a timely manner. It is also a priority of this policy to ensure that residents are made aware of and understand our approach to the management of damp, mould, and condensation, as well as their own responsibilities, in a collective effort to minimise damp and mould in council homes.
- 3.2.2 Tenants are actively encouraged to report issues of DMC at the earliest opportunity, and a number of different mechanisms are provided for them to do this. Whenever anyone reports issues with damp, mould, or condensation, staff will approach the situation with compassion and respect, refraining from assigning blame or assuming the root cause.
- 3.2.3 Homes & Neighbourhoods will work with residents on an individual basis to understand their specific circumstances, including information about any disabilities or vulnerabilities, which will be considered to provide a bespoke response to each case of DMC.
- 3.2.4 Effective communication with residents is at the core of the approach. All residents will be asked to explain what the issues are and how they are affecting their lives. This will feed into the individual response and actions for each case of DMC. The focus will be on the experience of resident in their home, rather than the 'property'.
- 3.2.5 Residents will be kept informed of the progress of their DMC case through every stage of the process, and will be provided with accurate timescales for each action (e.g. survey, repairs, mould treatment). They will receive regular updates, and all actions will be confirmed in writing so that they are fully aware of the current position and next steps. Any delays or changes will also be communicated as soon as they arise.

- 3.2.6 Follow-up surveys will be carried out to ensure that residents are satisfied that their case of DMC has been completed effectively and that all issues, including root causes, have been resolved.
- 3.2.7 The council provides information for tenants on its [Damp, Mould and Condensation webpage](#). Educational leaflets are also provided when DMC surveys are carried out and following DMC treatment or repairs.
- 3.2.8 Homes & Neighbourhoods is committed to 'finding our silence' by identifying homes where tenants could be at risk from DMC hazards but where they have not reported this. A proactive approach will be taken to contact tenants in these cases and arrangements may be made to visit their homes to carry out surveys, where appropriate, to systematically address any current DMC issues and reduce future cases.

3.3 Reporting DMC

- 3.3.1 Tenants can report damp, mould and condensation hazards through the following methods:
- Phone - 01484 414800 (out of hours emergencies 01484 414850)
 - Email – dmc@kirklees.gov.uk
 - Online – [Report a repair](#)
 - Face-to-face, with Homes & Neighbourhoods staff.
- 3.3.2 Other people, including GPs, social workers and visitors to tenants' homes, can report damp, mould and condensation concerns on a tenant's behalf, using the phone number or email address above.
- 3.3.3 Tenants and others reporting DMC hazards and concerns are encouraged to provide as much information as possible to assist with the prioritisation of DMC activities.
- 3.3.4 If any council staff or contractors are made aware of damp, mould and condensation hazards in tenants' homes, they should immediately make DMC staff aware through the methods above.

3.4 Prioritising DMC

- 3.4.1 Staff will be trained to identify and triage the severity of the damp, mould and condensation hazards raised and be able to prioritise surveys effectively.
- 3.4.2 Residents' individual circumstances and vulnerabilities will be identified at the earliest possible stage and the information used to prioritise and order works accordingly.

3.5 Surveying DMC

- 3.5.1 Surveys will be completed by competent staff, or suitably qualified independent surveyors, utilising the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to capture information to prioritise any required repairs and remedial works, as well as data to influence future planned capital improvement programmes.
- 3.5.2 While at the property, upon the completion of the survey, residents will be provided with:
- Guidance and information leaflets (without apportioning blame) on how to identify and reduce condensation to prevent the growth and spread of mould.
 - A link to Kirklees Council's damp, mould and condensation webpage: [Damp, mould and condensation | Kirklees Council](#).
 - A free hygrometer, for the resident to measure and monitor the humidity in the property.
 - A free moisture absorber and odour neutraliser to assist with any excess moisture and condensation in the property.
- 3.5.3 From the survey findings, the necessary treatments and work orders will be raised and commissioned to the relevant contractor(s), who will make access arrangements with the resident.
- 3.5.4 An outcome letter from the survey, detailing what was identified, any necessary works and the next steps will be sent to the resident. A copy of the survey and outcome letter will be stored in the appropriate repository on Kirklees Council systems.
- 3.5.5 A three month check with the resident and six-month follow-up visit will be arranged with residents who have reported damp, mould, and condensation hazards where repairs and remedial works have been completed. These will be carried out based on the scale of the original issue, risk and residents' individual circumstances.

3.6 Access and decants

- 3.6.1 Under the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, tenants must allow council staff, agents or contractors access to their homes where there are repair issues and/or any potential health and safety concerns.
- 3.6.2 Kirklees Council, and its appointed contractors, will follow a robust and consistent access procedure to make reasonable attempts to access a property and carry out a survey, or repairs and remedial works. This will be done in line with the Tenancy Agreement.
- 3.6.3 All unsuccessful access attempts will be recorded on Kirklees Council systems to provide evidence and adherence to procedural requirements.
- 3.6.4 Depending on the recommendations from the survey, the scale of works required, and the complexities and risks associated with the property and resident, it may be identified that decanting the resident(s) would be necessary until the damp and mould hazard is eradicated. Council officers will work with tenants to find the most appropriate solution in these cases.

3.7 Asset management

- 3.7.1 Kirklees Council aims to identify and rectify the underlying causes of damp and mould, and will work with residents, staff and contractors to ensure that the fabric of its properties is free of defects and protected from deterioration and damage caused by damp, mould, and condensation.
- 3.7.2 Treatment, repairs and remedial works will be commissioned to suitable and competent contractor(s), who will ensure works are delivered safely and in accordance with this policy, other applicable policies and supporting procedures.
- 3.7.3 Data from completed DMC surveys, and stock condition surveys, will be collected and analysed to make evidence-based plans for future capital improvement programmes.
- 3.7.4 Should a property defect be identified through surveys that is either currently recurring or is likely to recur within other homes, works will be identified and carried out as a planned programme. This ensures a proactive approach to tackling defects that may result in damp, mould, or condensation in the future.

3.8 Complaints, claims and compliments

- 3.8.1 The Customer Experience Team handles all compliments and complaints about Homes & Neighbourhoods in relation to services provided to council residents and leaseholders. The team can be contacted using:
- Phone - contact 01484 414800.
 - Online – [Complaints and Compliments webpage](#)
- 3.8.2 The Housing Ombudsman code sets out good practice that Kirklees Council follows, to ensure it responds to complaints effectively and fairly.
- 3.8.3 All complaints are dealt with in line with Homes & Neighbourhoods' Complaints Policy.

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Council responsibilities

- 4.1.1 The Cabinet and Chief Executive Officer of Kirklees Council retain the overall accountability for the provision and operation of this policy.
- 4.1.2 The Service Director for Homes and Neighbourhoods has the responsibility for the consistent implementation and monitoring of this policy.

- 4.1.3 The Head of Assets and Development is responsible for the delivery of Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) surveys and for the collating and retention of property data including damp, mould and condensation.
- 4.1.4 The Service Manager Assets is responsible for appointing the contractor(s) (includes internal and external workers) to complete repairs and remedial works where building defects and failures have been identified by surveys, as well as the development of planned capital improvement programmes to eradicate the causes of damp and mould.
- 4.1.5 The General Manager Assets is responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating HHSRS property surveys, providing residents with hygrometers and information leaflets as well as raising the required repairs and remedial works.
- 4.1.6 The Head of Property Services is responsible for the delivery of repairs and maintenance services, including the application of mould treatments and the removal of building fabric issues creating damp, mould, and condensation hazards. They will utilise an internal workforce primarily, as well as a robust supply chain of third-party contractors to complete works where specialisms and/or additional capacity is required.
- 4.1.7 The Service Manager Property Services is responsible for resourcing and co-ordinating the required repairs and maintenance services.
- 4.1.8 Third party contractors may be employed to carry out some repair and maintenance works. Contractors will be required to operate in accordance with the council's policies and procedures. Relevant information will be included in contract documentation.

4.2 Tenant responsibilities

- 4.2.1 Tenants can help the council to resolve damp, mould and condensation issues in their homes by:
- Keeping their contact details up to date on their [MyKirklees Account](#), or making sure the council records them when contacting by phone or email.
 - Making sure the council and contractors can access their homes to survey and complete works (treatments and/or repairs).
 - Taking some time to read the information, support, and guidance on the council's [Damp, Mould and Condensation webpage](#).

5 Monitoring and review

5.1 Monitoring and improvement

- 5.1.1 The day-to-day operational governance of damp and mould will be managed by the Damp and Mould Action Group. This group will report to the Service Managers Operational Group and then to the Asset Management & Building Safety Steering Group.
- 5.1.2 Performance reports will be provided to the Cabinet, Senior Management Team (SMT) and Homes and Neighbourhoods Investment Board (HNIB) Building Safety Assurance Board (BSAB) to monitor the service delivery of damp, mould, and condensation activities.
- 5.1.3 To measure and monitor the effectiveness of damp, mould, and condensation activities, and provide stakeholders assurance, our performance reports will include the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

Surveying

- Number of HHSRS hazards identified by severity.
- Number of surveys raised and appointed.
- Number of surveys completed.
- Average E2E (end to end, in days), reported to survey completed.
- Three month and six-month post works surveys raised and appointed.
- Three month and six-month post works surveys completed.
- Percentage of three month and six-month post works surveys completed.

Repairs and Remedial Works

- Number of work orders raised and appointed.
- Number of work orders completed.
- Average E2E (end to end, in days), orders raised to works completed.
- Customer satisfaction.

- 5.1.4 The frequency of submitting the performance reports will depend on the governance forum, as well as the time parameters required i.e., weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually.
- 5.1.5 Kirklees Council will ensure that budgets are used effectively and efficiently to manage damp, mould and condensation hazards whilst provide a value for money (VFM) service to residents.
- 5.1.6 Resident satisfaction surveys will be completed to analyse our resident's perspective of service delivery in relation to damp, mould, and condensation.
- 5.1.7 Staff and contractor feedback will be used to identify trends, common themes, and opportunities for improvement within service delivery.
- 5.1.8 Where relevant information is available, Kirklees Council will benchmark our performance against other social housing providers to review the effectiveness of this policy and supporting procedures.

5.1.9 The supporting procedural documents to this policy will provide greater detail, information and context for staff and contractors to deliver a robust and consistent damp, mould, and condensation service.

5.1.10 The DMC procedure will amplify the sequencing and delivery of the service, which includes the following elements:

- Reporting DMC;
- Prioritising DMC;
- Surveying DMC;
- Remedial Actions;
- Six-month post works visit;
- Recurring reports of DMC;
- Access;
- Complaints; and
- Asset Management.

5.2 Policy review

5.2.1 This interim policy will be reviewed in one year, or in response to relevant changes in legislation, regulation or organisational structures.

5.2.2 The policy may also be reviewed sooner if lessons learned and service feedback identifies changes which need to be adopted and embedded into service delivery;

5.2.3 Any significant changes will be consulted on prior to implementation and relevant approvals sought from in line with the governance structure set out below:

5.2.4 This policy and future updates will be published on the council's website.

6 Associated policies and strategies

6.1 Homes & Neighbourhoods policies

6.1.1 The following Homes & Neighbourhoods policies and procedures are relevant:

- Damp, Mould and Condensation (DMC) Procedure
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Vulnerable Tenant Policy
- Complaints Policy

- Health and Safety Policy
- Asbestos Management Policy and Procedure
- [Damp, mould and condensation | Kirklees Council](#)

6.2 External guidance

6.2.1 The following Housing Ombudsman reports are relevant:

- Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Gap Analysis
- Housing Ombudsman Special Report on Rochdale Boroughwide Housing

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