



**Solihull**  
Community Housing  
Shaping our neighbourhoods

# Damp and Mould Policy 2025



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<b>Who's this for?</b>	All Residents and Staff
<b>Document status</b>	Final
<b>Date created</b>	1/2/25
<b>Last updated</b>	February 2025
<b>To be reviewed</b>	February 2027
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Repairs Manager
<b>Other related documents</b>	Repairs and Maintenance Standard Safer Homes Standard Resident Engagement Standard Planned Maintenance Policy Anti-Social Behaviour Policy Empty Homes Lettable Standard Complaints Policy and Procedure Repairs Procedure

## Policy statement

As accountable landlord, Solihull Council is responsible for keeping its tenant's homes safe from hazards under the Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) within section 9 of the Housing Act 2004. One of those hazards is identified as damp and mould. Within 'Awaab's Law', an integral element of the Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023, there are specific timeframes to complete an inspection, provide a written report and remedy hazards identified under HHSRS.

This policy sets out the approach of Solihull Community Housing (SCH), the managing agent for Solihull Council in dealing with reports of damp, mould and condensation within a Solihull Council owned property. It will ensure a customer centred approach to damp and mould by:

- keeping residents safe and well, and in so doing providing assurance that the Council is compliant with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Responding swiftly and effectively to incidents of damp and mould to safeguard the health and wellbeing of tenants and their families.
- Identifying homes liable to damp, mould and condensation, and in proactively preventing their occurrence in the first place, using good practices and design and where possible, smart technology.

## Key principles

The types of damp covered by this policy are :

### **Rising Damp:**

The movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building (through capillary action).

### **Penetrating Damp (including internal leaks):**

Water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structures. The cause of penetrating damp can be the result of:

- Water ingress due to defective or poor original design/workmanship of the structure
- Defective components such as roof coverings, external walls, doors and windows
- Defective or blocked rainwater gutters and pipes
- Defective or leaking internal waste pipes, hot and cold water and heating system
- Flooding due to burst pipes

### **Condensation Damp:**

Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface and then condenses producing water droplets, such as surface condensation arising when the inner surface of the structure is cooler than the air in the room.

Additional factors causing condensation could include:

- Inadequate ventilation (e.g. natural opening windows and trickle/background vents and mechanical extraction in bathrooms and kitchens).
- Inadequate heating (e.g. undersized boilers and radiators, draught stripping).
- Inadequate thermal insulation (e.g. missing or defective wall and loft insulation).
- High humidity (e.g. presence of rising and penetrating damp).
- Poor building design and construction (e.g. specific cold areas (bridging) which are integral with the building construction).

Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and will only grow on damp surfaces. This is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present.

Everyone has responsibility to identify and report damp, mould and condensation where it may be present. This includes but is not limited to:

- Tenants and leaseholders (where the issue relates to the external fabric of the building).
- SCH staff and contractors.
- Officers of the Council and elected Members.

## Objectives

The objectives of this policy is to ensure that:

- Solihull Council tenants are provided with a dry, warm, healthy home and are treated in a fair and consistent way.
- Compliance with statutory requirements and good practice.
- SCH works in partnership with tenants to provide a safe and healthy internal environment.
- SCH carries out effective investigations into reports of damp, mould and condensation.
- SCH implements all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp including, managing, and controlling condensation.
- Tenants are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp, mould and condensation.
- Budgets are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp, mould and condensation problems.
- The fabric of a property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp, mould and condensation.

## Policy actions

To deliver this policy and be compliant we will provide a comprehensive response to damp, mould and condensation:

- Treat residents reporting damp, mould and condensation with respect and empathy.
- Promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage damp, mould and condensation. All residents reporting damp, mould or condensation will receive a copy of our latest guidance.
- Ensure that all relevant front-line staff (including contractors) have training to enable them to identify and report early signs of damp, mould and condensation.
- Ensure that our response to reports of damp, mould and condensation are timely and reflect the urgency of the issue.
- Make reasonable attempts to access the property to inspect and carry out works
- Investigate to determine the cause of damp, mould and condensation and carry out remedial repairs and actions in accordance with the tenancy agreement and repairs standard. This may include examining neighbouring properties to ensure our response is as effective as possible.
- Inform the tenant of the findings of the investigations following a home visit. This will include identifying possible causes of damp, mould and condensation; recommending effective solutions and all necessary remedial works and actions; and the estimated timescales to complete the works.
- Complete any remedial works/actions within a reasonable timescale. This will be dependent on the severity and urgency of the problem and on the complexity of the solution of the remedial works/actions required.
- We will ensure that specialist contractors are employed to carry out any works and that the tenant's possessions are adequately protected during the works.

As the managing agent for Solihull Council, it is our ongoing responsibility to:

- Provide insulation within the tenant's home in accordance with the Decent Homes Standard to help reduce the likelihood of condensation occurring.
- Maintain a tenant's home to avoid penetrating and rising damp and for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
- Undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation damp, where it is reasonable and practical to do so, with regard to the constraints of the existing building design and structure and in taking a pragmatic approach in finding appropriate solutions.
- Where practicable, use of environmental sensors for the collection of data in properties at high risk of damp and mould to better target early intervention and reduce risk to tenants.

## Desired outcomes

- Improve pathway from customer reporting damp, mould and condensation to the point where a reasonable solution is in place.
- A clear approach to reporting mould and condensation, with residents and colleagues understanding SCH and resident responsibilities.
- Residents' feel the reporting of damp, mould and condensation issues is easy to navigate and that solutions are provided promptly.
- Vulnerable residents are supported in accessing the service and sign-posted to the financial support available at the time.
- A demonstrably efficient and good quality maintenance service.
- Dangerous hazards are rectified quickly, and residents' feel safe in their home.
- Demonstrable response to customer feedback and continuous improvement.
- The response to damp, mould and condensation is fair and consistent but recognises the individual needs and circumstances, and the constraints imposed by the nature of the housing stock.

## Appeals

A tenant can request a review of an inspection and the diagnosis and proposed works to be conducted.

A tenant can raise damp, mould, and condensation concerns in their property with a Member or MP.

A tenant who is not satisfied with our approach in assessing and managing their damp, mould, and condensation concerns can make a formal complaint under the SCH Complaints Process.

## Performance indicators

The performance of this policy will be monitored in line with the statutory timeframes as follows:

- Reports of damp and mould will be inspected within 14 calendar days.
- An inspection report (hazards identified and next steps) will be provided within 48 hours of an investigation concluding.
- Emergency repairs will start as soon as reasonably practicable, and always within 24 hours.
- Where a hazard identified poses a significant risk to the health or safety of the tenant, repair works will begin within 24 hours of the investigation.

- Where damp and mould is present, and is an issue but not a hazard, repair work must be completed within 28 days.
- Start planned works within 12 weeks.
- Repair work completed will be checked through an inspection as soon as reasonable after the work is done.
- Resident satisfaction with work undertaken.
- Level of missed appointments, failed post inspections.
- Share key lessons from complaints and the positive impact of changes made as a result with tenants.

## Key legislation

- The Housing Act 1985
- The Housing Act 2004
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 1010
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Health and Safety at work Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 1018
- Building Safety Act 2022
- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Decent Homes Standard

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years – unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise – to ensure that it continues to meet the stated objectives and take account of good practice developments.