

Condensation, Damp and Mould Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. ReSI Housing Limited (ReSI Housing or the Company) are committed to ensuring that our residents stay safe, healthy and well in their homes. Damp and mould are issues which can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of our residents, and cause damage to homes.
- 1.2. This policy sets out our approach to dealing with condensation, damp and mould in the properties we are responsible for including communal areas. It covers the services we provided to customers who occupy our homes and ReSI Housing obligations as per the terms of the lease.

2. Our Policy Statement

2.1 Resi Housing will:

- Provide dry, warm, healthy and safe homes for our residents which are free from any hazards.
- Comply with legislative, regulatory and contractual (including lease) obligations.
- Ensure our compliance with contractual, regulatory and legislative obligations.
- Ensure the fabric of properties which we are responsible for is protected from deterioration.
- Take responsibility for diagnosing and resolving damp and mould in a timely and effective way where they result from issues that require repair that fall under our responsibility in the lease.
- Support residents and provide them with practical, clear and accessible guidance on resolving damp and mould issues
- Ensure that our Property Managers understand how to identify potential causes of damp, mould and condensation and have the right level of knowledge to advise residents, diagnose problems and provide solutions
- Use our technical knowledge, property and repairs data, and relationships with residents to develop customer focused approaches to resolving issues for our residents and informing our future investment priorities.
- Communicate with our residents clearly and regularly regarding any actions we plan to take and any actions our residents are advised to take in dealing with damp and mould issues.

- Actively use residents' feedback to improve our services and how we manage reports of damp, mould, and excessive condensation.
- Respond to any complaints promptly and in line with our Complaints Policy and the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code

2.2 We understand the underlying causes of damp, mould and condensation can be complicated and the effect it can have on the lives of people in our homes. We take a zero-tolerance approach to any issues that may cause harm to our residents.

2.3 For communal areas where we have responsibility, we have a scheduled maintenance plan and as part of it we are carrying out surveys which will help us assess the extent of any potential cases of damp and mould.

2.4 We will continuously work with the Property Managers acting on our behalf to ensure they deliver against their obligations and help us meet all regulatory responsibilities in this area.

3. Definitions

3.1 This is not an exhaustive list and highlights commonly used terminology.

3.2 Damp: an excess of moisture that can't escape from a structure, which can also go on to cause significant damage to the building. There are three/four main causes of dampness in homes, which each require different solutions.

3.3 Rising damp: water that rises through fabric and brick walls of a building after being absorbed from the surrounding ground.

3.4 Penetrating damp: water penetrates the fabric of the building from the outside to the inside, for example, because of a leak.

3.5 Condensation: occurs when warm, moist air touches a cooler surface such as tiles, windows, or walls. If left for a long period of time, it can cause damp and/or mould.

3.6 Mould: is a type of fungus. It spreads through spores, which are invisible to the naked eye but are in the air around us all the time and can quickly grow on surfaces where dampness persists, or water has formed into a visible covering.

- 3.7 All homes in England can be affected by condensation because the climate is often cool and wet. Normal household activities also constantly release moisture into the air. Good practice in the home minimises and alleviates condensation, and in many cases will prevent it causing dampness and persistent mould. However, on occasion the root cause can be a problem that requires a repair or an improvement to the home. In others, a different solution may be needed (for example, in cases of severe overcrowding).

4. Preventative Action

- 4.1 We will work with our Property Managers to identify properties we are responsible for or communal that have, or may be at risk of developing problems with damp and mould.
- 4.2 We will provide information on our website, and through other channels, to raise awareness about the causes of damp and mould. This will include details about how everyday activities in the home can generate condensation and what residents can do to help prevent damp, through for instance, ventilation, controlling the buildup of moisture and adequate heating. Where there is mould growth, we will provide advice on how this could be treated.
- 4.3 Our Property Managers will have the skills and knowledge to identify signs of damp and mould and discuss with residents how to manage the problem.

5. Dealing with damp and mould

- 5.1 Residents are required to report any problems to our Property Managers as soon as possible after noticing a problem. When the report is received, the Property Manager will determine the cause and the responsibility for dealing with the issue.
- 5.2 Where damp is because of condensation, we will work with our residents to take appropriate measures to prevent damp and mould occurring. This might include advice about how to control moisture levels or increase ventilation or heating, so that damp levels are kept low.
- 5.3 When a particularly severe or recurring damp or mould issue is identified we will undertake a comprehensive risk assessment which might result in a range of actions to support the residents depending on their circumstances.
- 5.4 We will keep residents informed of any property inspections, diagnosis of issues and the timetabling of works, where these are required. This includes explaining to them why work

might be needed and what work might be done. Where work is not required or is not the responsibility of ReSI Housing, residents will be informed and we will explain the reason why no further work is needed and the steps they should take.

- 5.5 For more complex cases, and especially where more intrusive building work is required and/or there is a serious health risk to the residents or a member of their household, we may require them to move out of their home either on a temporary or permanent basis. We will consider the individual circumstances of the resident. We will ensure that appropriate checks are carried out at the property to ensure it is suitable for the resident to return to.
- 5.6 Our leasehold agreements require customers to allow ReSI Housing (including appointed contractors) access to their home to carry out works at the agreed appointment time. If we are unable to gain access and the integrity of the property, its fabric and/or the safety of the customer or those in the vicinity of the property is compromised, we will take appropriate action. For example, this may include but is not limited to obtaining an injunction for access.

6 Timescales in accordance with Awaabs Law

- 6.1 The following timescales will be followed as part of our handling of damp and mould:
- Investigate reports of damp and mould within **14 calendar days** of notification.
 - Commence any required repair works within 7 calendar days of identifying a hazard.
 - Complete repairs within a reasonable timeframe, with priority given to urgent risks to health and safety.
 - Ensure vulnerable residents (e.g., young children, older adults, people with respiratory issues) are given additional support and prioritisation.
 - Carry out proactive inspections of properties identified as at risk of damp and mould.
 - Maintain open communication with residents throughout, including updates on inspections, planned works, and expected timeframes.
 - Provide clear escalation routes where a resident believes their concern has not been addressed adequately

7 Supporting our residents

- 7.1 We will give residents advice on how to prevent damp and what they should do to remove mould. However, we recognise that not every resident will be in a position to resolve damp and mould themselves. We will provide appropriate support in such cases in relation to the specific circumstances and the individual customer's needs.

7.2 We will learn lessons from damp and mould cases, update our technical approach and how we communicate and support our residents, in order to improve future responses.

8. Changes to this policy.

8.1 No change to this policy will be made without the authority of the Board.

9. Monitoring and review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed as required or at least every two years to incorporate any changes in legislation or good practice.