

# Damp and Mould Policy

## Our Vision

Building better lives through social care and housing in local communities.

## Our Mission

We co-design and deliver services that offer innovative social care solutions and support people to thrive.

## Our Values

We are  
**caring** and  
**compassionate**



We are  
**inclusive**  
and **trusted**



We focus on  
**excellence**  
and  
**innovation**



We work in  
**partnership**  
and are  
**one-team**



Cally Yard  
439 Caledonian Road,  
London, N7 9BG  
T: 0333 010 4600

[lookahead.org.uk](http://lookahead.org.uk)

 **Look Ahead**  
CARE, SUPPORT AND HOUSING

## **Supporting Procedures, Documents and Guidance**

[Background & Legislation](#)  
[Ventilation Guidance](#)

**Copies of these documents can be supplied on request**

# **1. Managing Damp and Mould**

- 1.1 We will generally identify damp and mould and the conditions where damp and mould may develop via the following methods -
- Property inspections – stock condition surveys and Property/Repair Team visits
  - Living Standard checks - these are local welfare and property condition checks.
  - Voids inspections – there are instances, especially with hoarding, where mould may develop.
  - Repair works – either staff or customers raising repairs.
  - Identification and monitoring of low EPC-rated properties
  - Via temperature and humidity monitoring units
  - Direct approach from a legal organisation - when this happens, though led by housing colleagues, we log all disrepair claims in the Asset team property register and list all actions to resolution.
- 1.2 Any property identified as suffering from damp or mould, or that has the potential to develop into a category 1 Housing Health & Safety Rating System ('HHSRS') damp and mould risk, will be logged within the Asset Team Property Register. These properties will immediately fall into a programme of remediation works. The identified properties are monitored at each Asset Management Operational Sub-Group meeting ('AMOSG') until there is confidence that the issues have been resolved. The number of properties identified either with serious damp and mould or with potential to develop into a high-risk damp and mould issue are reported as part of the Decent Homes' information within Asset & Risk Committee (ARC) and Asset Management Group (AMG) reports.
- 1.3 Properties are revisited, or customers will be called back within a period of no longer than 6 weeks on completion of works. This will be actioned by a member of staff or allocated as a property visit to a repairs and voids contractor. Acceptable outcomes of these follow up calls/visits will be either via a closing out inspection reports or a completed customer satisfaction survey.
- 1.4 We use proactive planned maintenance programmes, identifying inappropriate ventilation components, identifying buildings with thermal and ventilation issues,

engaging technical expertise as required and tracking any repair orders raised for damp and mould to mitigate risks.

1.5 Our approach to managing damp and mould includes:

- Identifying potential risk with asset information and the stock investment programme – this will be achieved by stock modelling within the new Asset Management System.
- The development of an inspection procedure to follow up any orders raised for damp and mould.
- The Living Standards checks are designed to highlight issues with damp and mould.
- We continue to work with our Communications Team to embed messages around preventing and reporting damp and mould through our customer newsletter and online resources, including a film regarding how best to avoid/treat damp.
- We have engaged with specialist technical consultants to assist with developing specifications where we have identified we need a mix of thermal and ventilation solutions.
- Technical staff have access to equipment to help assess the causes of damp and mould and to identify bespoke solutions.
- We engage with specialist consultants when required to identify and address block and estate-wide issues relating to damp and mould.
- All reported damp and mould Work Orders automatically receive a priority upgrade to an urgent timeframe (5 Working days), with the aim of preventing customers from living in harmful conditions for any prolonged period. This also ensures that these attendances are appointed to reduce the cases of no accesses.

1.6 Any complaints relating to damp and mould will be managed in line with our Complaints & Feedback Policy.

1.7 Where the organisation has been required to cap a gas property, due to the inability to test the gas meter or where the customer has advised they do not want gas in their property, the organisation split the reporting and monitoring of these properties between Supported and Unsupported. With Supported properties these will be monitored through local teams and via our Living Standards checks to ensure the customers' needs are met. With Unsupported housing teams undertake a risk assessment followed by a technical review to work with the customer to offer support with meter debt clearing and assistance with adequate heating and hot water services. We also utilise remote monitoring devices to monitor thermal and dewpoint levels as an indicator to potential conditions where damp and mould could develop. Weekly updates of capped properties are shared with internal stakeholders.

## **2. Training**

- 2.1 We will ensure that all technical staff receive adequate and appropriate training to maintain knowledge and enhance proactive identification and remediation.
- 2.2 For non-technical staff an eLearning module has been developed and will be part of mandatory training.
- 2.3 We have also developed a short film to highlight the conditions which increase the likelihood of damp and mould occurring and actions to take to mitigate the likelihood of damp and mould in the home. The film is available to both customers and staff.

## **3. Legal Claims Relating to Damp and Mould**

- 3.1 As a landlord we are responsible for keeping the structure of our assets in good repair, in addition to maintaining heating, sanitation and service installations. We are responsible for those installations that are fitted by us, or which have been adopted by us.
- 3.2 The customer is responsible for reporting any signs of damp, mould, or condensation in line with their repairing responsibilities as detailed in their tenancy agreement.
- 3.3 The customer is responsible for allowing us access into their home to carry out inspections, repair or remedial works in line with their responsibilities as detailed in their tenancy agreement. If access is not granted, then appropriate legal proceedings may be taken to enable inspection or repair works to be complete. Customers may be recharged for legal costs and costs to gain access if legal action is taken.
- 3.4 We assess all legal claims and consider if they are more appropriately dealt with through our Complaints & Feedback Policy (e.g. if they have not previously been reported).
- 3.5 Look Ahead have taken the decision not to respond to legal representatives advising of disrepair claims unless a customer has raised a repair or is engaged with Look Ahead's complaints procedure. If a customer has not raised a repair or advised Look Ahead of dissatisfaction with their property and we receive a direct communication from a customer's appointed legal representation, we will raise a stage one complaint on the customer's behalf and contact them directly to resolve the issues.
- 3.6 If however, a claim is judged to be potentially valid then the Pre-action Protocol is followed, and responses are handled through legal advisors. By default, we will seek to appoint our own in-house surveyor as the joint expert.

## Record Keeping and Monitoring

We will comply with our Retention & Disposal Schedule which can be found by clicking [Here](#) or visiting our website at [www.lookahead.org.uk](http://www.lookahead.org.uk)

KPI performance will be reported to Asset Management Group, Asset and Risk Committee and Board.

As part of the review process, following the damp and mould audit, the auditors recommended more visibility to SLT and Board regarding damp and mould repairs and actions. The following information has been provided to align with this recommendation. These outputs have been built into our damp and mould tracker to provide live updates at any time.

- *Number of damp and mould cases raised -*
- *Current number of open cases -*
- *% of follow up technical inspections completed -*
- *Number requiring wash-downs -*
- *% of required wash downs completed -*
- *Missed or late appointments in relation to damp and mould -*

### Policy Sign Off and Ownership

|                             |                                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
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### Version History

| Version | Date     | Description of Changes                                                                               | Author        |
|---------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1.0     | Oct 2024 | New Policy                                                                                           | Jason Hapgood |
| 2.0     | Feb 2025 | 12 Month review of compliance and implementation. Section added in relation to capping gas supplies. | Jason Hapgood |