Damp and Mould Policy

Version Number	V3
Date Applies From	19/08/26
Policy Owner	Executive Director of Customer
Next Review Date	Annual review or following any material change to Awaab's Law or associated statutory/regulatory requirements.
Strategy Link	• Safe, well maintained, sustainable and affordable homes • Customer focused and equitable services

Key connected legislation/regulation:

- The Housing Act 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 – Awaab's Law
- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation Act 2023)

Annual Checks

Policy owners should ensure that an annual check of hyperlinks, roles, and names is undertaken. These checks are in addition to formal review process. Please see Policy and Procedure framework guidance for further details.

If you need this information in an alternative language please call

0161 605 7260

For other formats please call

0300 123 5522

Aim of Policy

This policy sets our approach to prevent and fix damp and mould within tenants' homes.

This policy applies to all homes and communal areas where ForHousing is the landlord, including where properties are identified for future disposal or are within an area marked for regeneration. There is no differentiation between property category, type and geographical area when dealing with damp and mould issues.

ForHousing will comply with all requirements and statutory timescales set out within the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 and any subsequent amendments.

The current requirements apply to phase one of Awaab's Law, covering all emergency hazards and damp and mould hazards that present a significant risk of harm. This policy will be reviewed and updated as the regulations are extended to further HHSRS hazards in future phases.

Policy

At ForHousing, we adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould. This means we will inspect and address all reported cases of damp. When diagnosing damp and mould we accept full responsibility for resolving the underlying issues, as is realistically possible, considering the property involved.

Damp reports can be made directly from tenants, or others acting on their behalf. They can also be identified by colleagues and contractors when they visit a tenant's home or vacant properties (voids) having works to relet them. We will also check when undertaking an annual gas safety visit to all properties to assess if there are any indications of damp or mould and action any case where this is identified.

Damp and mould can be reported through any of our communication channels. Standard questions ensure we will provide an accurate and consistent approach to diagnosing the cause and extent of the damp and mould. We will also employ appropriately qualified colleagues to accurately inspect, diagnose and specify remedial works for damp and mould.

Awaab's Law applies where the hazard arises from a deficiency in the home, including defects, disrepair, lack of maintenance or other property-related causes. Investigations will consider the cause, severity, risk to occupants and any action required to make the home safe.

ForHousing will not assume that damp and mould is caused by resident lifestyle, behaviour or occupancy patterns. Investigations will be evidence based and will consider property defects, thermal performance, ventilation, insulation, heating provision and other building related factors before any conclusions are reached. Where resident practices may contribute to moisture levels, advice and support will be provided alongside action to address any property related cause.

All void homes will have a full visual technical inspection at survey stage and should issues of potential damp and mould be identified, then a full damp inspection will be undertaken and required remedial works undertaken.

Colleagues will be trained to provide a customer-focused approach to dealing with damp and mould reports. This includes listening to tenants to understand their concerns, particularly regarding the impact of the damp and mould on the household. This will be refreshed every 12 months or subject to review pending updated or changed legislation .

We will set service standards for how we will inspect and resolve damp and mould including those covered under Awaab's Law and will publish these on our website. We will keep tenants regularly informed about the progress of their damp inspection and associated work. This will include detailed information about the works ordered, how long this will take and what this will involve, such as preparing for the works and any disruption this will entail.

We will ask questions with regards any health or vulnerability issues within the household as part of the damp and mould inspection, to enable the required works to be prioritised accordingly and determine if any support is required to facilitate the works. This could include a temporary relocation or being permanently rehoused. The tenant will be supported through this process to ensure all associated costs are fully covered.

Vulnerability and household circumstances will be considered at triage, investigation, works planning, access arrangements, temporary accommodation decisions and post-completion review. Reasonable adjustments will be considered throughout, including communication needs, appointment arrangements, preparation for works and support to move where temporary accommodation is required.

If we receive any indication of damp or mould through a Disrepair Claim, in addition to responding accordingly in line with the legal Pre-Action Protocol, we will take all necessary actions to inspect and undertake necessary remedial works to address the source of the damp or mould issue including seeking all available means to gain access.

When we identify mould issues when undertaking the damp and mould inspection, that could potentially be a health risk, we will undertake a precautionary mould clean in advance of the remedial works to remove this potential risk to tenants. This will be completed as an emergency dependent on the severity of the mould growth or if works are identified to be prioritised following health and vulnerability checks The presence of mould will not be treated as the root cause of the issue. ForHousing will identify and address the underlying cause of damp and mould wherever reasonably practicable. Cases will not be considered resolved solely through mould treatment where underlying contributory factors remain unaddressed.

We will ensure that the damp and mould service is effective by carrying out a post inspection a minimum of six weeks after completing the works, we will also contact the tenant via a survey 12 weeks after the works are completed to verify that the completed works have addressed the reported problem. We will also issue a survey to tenants on completion of their repair to obtain feedback on their customer experience from when they first reported the issue to when the works were completed.

Quality assurance checks will be completed on damp and mould works, including post-inspection, tenant confirmation where appropriate and evidence that the root cause has been addressed.

We will set aside suitable revenue budgets to deal with reported damp and mould issues effectively and in a timely manner. We will also set aside an annual capital budget to enable planned works schemes to be developed and packaged. These will be data led, informed by:

- Stock condition data, including geographical areas, property type, age and energy efficiency (SAP) rating; and
- Business intelligence, built up from insight from previously reported and completed damp and condensation responsive repairs

We will also use our strategy for delivering net zero carbon homes as an opportunity to prevent damp and mould.

We will use damp and mould related satisfaction surveys and complaints as valuable tenant feedback to improve our approach to tackling damp and mould. Damp and mould complaints will be reviewed to identify service failures, trends, opportunities for learning and any actual or potential breaches of statutory obligations. Learning outcomes will inform procedural improvements, staff training, contractor management and service development.

Awaab's Law

We will take a safety-first approach to hazards within Awaab's Law to prioritise tenant safety and protect tenants at the earliest opportunity.

Our approach is as below:

Stage	Emergency Hazard	Significant Hazard
Hazard reported (Triage)	Day 0	Day 0
Investigation	Within 24 hours including make safe works	Within 10 working days
Letter / Written Summary	Within 3 working days of investigation	Within 3 working days of investigation
Make Safe Works	(See investigation)	Within 5 working days of investigation
Temporary accommodation required?	If cannot be made safe	If cannot be made safe within required timescales above.
Further remedial works	As required	Supplementary preventative works to begin, or steps taken to begin, within 5 working days and no later than 12 weeks where required

Stage 1: Hazard reported

- Keyfax repairs diagnostic assessment
- Risk assessment
- Identification of vulnerabilities
- Emergency/non-emergency determination

Stage 2: Investigation

- Formal hazard assessment and determination by ForHousing surveyor
- Emergency Hazard – Within 24 hours
- Significant Hazard – Within 10 working days

- Investigations will be undertaken by a competent person with the skills and experience to assess whether the home is affected by an emergency hazard or a significant damp and mould hazard.
- Where the initial investigation cannot determine the cause or level of risk, or new information, a material change in circumstances or associated issues are identified, a further or renewed investigation or specialist inspection will be arranged, and the tenant will be kept informed.

Stage 3: Letter / Written Summary

- Following completion of the investigation, tenants will receive a written summary of findings within three working days.
- The written summary will confirm whether the hazard has been assessed as significant or emergency, the nature of the hazard, any safety, remedial or supplementary preventative works required, the timescales for completion, any interim safety measures and how and when the tenant will be updated.
- Information will be provided in an accessible format where required, including translations, alternative communication methods or reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the household.
- The written summary will be issued by the responsible service lead or nominated officer and monitored through performance reporting and case records to evidence compliance with statutory timescales.
- Tenants will be provided with clear information on how to escalate concerns, make a complaint or request a review if they disagree with the assessment, proposed timescales, works or suitability of temporary accommodation.

Stage 4: Make Safe Works

- This may include mould treatment, isolation of affected areas, installation of temporary measures, provision of equipment, or temporary relocation
- Where temporary or interim measures are used to make the home safe, ForHousing will keep the property safe until all remedial and supplementary preventative works are completed.

Stage 5: Temporary Accommodation

- Where safety works cannot be completed within the required statutory timescales, the property cannot be made safe, or remaining in the home would present a risk to the health or safety of the household, ForHousing will arrange suitable temporary accommodation at no cost to the tenant. Suitability will be assessed based on the household's individual circumstances. Decisions, offers made, tenant responses and review arrangements will be recorded, and accommodation will remain available until the property is safe to occupy.
- Tenants will not be expected to meet any reasonable additional costs associated with temporary accommodation, and accommodation will be reviewed regularly until the home is safe to occupy.
- Where temporary accommodation is not required, or while arrangements are being made, tenants will be provided with clear safety advice and any interim measures needed to reduce risk until the home is safe.

Stage 6: Further Works

- Where an emergency or significant damp and mould hazard is identified, ForHousing will complete immediate safety works within statutory timescales to remove or mitigate the risk. Any further remedial or supplementary preventative works required to resolve the root cause and reduce the risk of recurrence will be scheduled, started and completed in line with Awaab's Law and communicated clearly to the tenant.
- Where supplementary preventative work is required, ForHousing will begin, or take steps to begin, the work within five working days of the investigation being concluded. Where it is not reasonably practicable to begin within this period, steps will be taken to ensure the work starts as soon as reasonably practicable and no later than 12 weeks from the conclusion of the investigation. The work will be completed as soon as reasonably practicable, and the tenant will be kept updated until all works are complete.
- Supplementary preventative work may include ventilation improvements, extractor fan upgrades, insulation works, drainage repairs, roof or guttering works, thermal bridging solutions or planned component replacements where these are needed to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- Statutory timescales remain applicable. Where compliance becomes impossible despite all reasonable endeavours, Forhousing will record the reasons, actions taken, interim safety controls and any revised delivery arrangements, and the case will be appropriately escalated and monitored until completion.
- ForHousing will continue to monitor interim measures and safety controls to ensure the home remains safe until all required works are completed and verified.

No Access

Where access is not provided, ForHousing will take all reasonable steps to secure access, maintain clear records of actions taken and continue to assess any potential risk to occupants in line with our No Access Policy.

This will include repeated contact attempts, use of different communication channels, consideration of vulnerability and, where risk remains, escalation through all available access routes. Records will be maintained of access attempts, tenant contact, risk assessment decisions and any interim safety advice provided while access is being secured.

A failure to gain access will not automatically result in a case being closed or the risk being treated as resolved. Forhousing will continue to take all reasonable steps to secure access, with escalation proportionate to the assessed risk and vulnerability of the household.

Awaab's Law definitions

- **Awaab's Law**
  The provisions introduced through the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, which place legal duties on social landlords to investigate, communicate and remedy prescribed hazards within prescribed timescales.

- **Damp**
  The presence of excess moisture within a building resulting from defects, water ingress, condensation, rising damp, penetrating damp, leaks or any other cause which may adversely affect the condition of the property or the health and wellbeing of occupants.

- **Mould**
  The visible growth of fungi caused by excess moisture within a property, which may present a risk to health and require investigation and remedial action.

- **Significant risk of harm**
  A damp and mould hazard that, following investigation or triage, is assessed as presenting a significant risk to the health or safety of one or more occupants and therefore falls within the requirements of Awaab's Law.

- **Emergency hazard**
  A hazard presenting an imminent and material risk to the health or safety of the occupants requiring immediate investigation and action to make the property safe within 24 hours.

- **Vulnerability**
  Any circumstance which may increase a household's susceptibility to harm arising from damp or mould, including but not limited to age, disability, long-term health conditions, respiratory conditions, pregnancy, mental health needs or other recognised vulnerabilities.

- **Triage assessments**
  The initial assessment undertaken upon receipt of a damp and mould report to determine risk, vulnerability, urgency, immediate precautionary safety requirements and next steps.

- **Reasonable steps**
  The actions ForHousing will take to fulfil its legal obligations, including attempts to contact tenants, arrange appointments, gain access, assess risks, implement interim safety measures and maintain appropriate records.

- **Safety works**
  Actions undertaken to remove, reduce or mitigate an immediate or significant risk to occupants, including temporary measures where appropriate, to ensure compliance with statutory timescales.

- **Remedial works**
  Repairs or interventions undertaken to rectify the underlying cause of damp and mould and reduce the risk of recurrence. These may be completed separately from immediate safety works where further investigation, specification or planned works are required.

- **Temporary accommodation**
  Suitable temporary accommodation provided at no cost to the tenant where a property cannot be made safe within the prescribed statutory timescales or where occupation presents an unacceptable risk to health and safety.

  Suitability will take account of the household’s individual circumstances, including disability, health needs, caring responsibilities, schooling, pets, location and any reasonable adjustments required. Records will be maintained of the decision, offer, tenant response and review arrangements.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We value diversity and work to create an inclusive environment for our customers and colleagues, where everyone has access to the same opportunities. We welcome our responsibility to comply with equalities legislation and regulatory requirements that relate to

equity, diversity and inclusion and aim to do more. Through our activities we aim to remove systemic barriers to equal opportunities and eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within our organisation.

We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with ForHousing's Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded and kept under active review.

Implementation and Communication

ForHousing will ensure that the Damp and Mould Policy is delivered through a number of ways including:

- Colleagues being required to use and apply the damp Keyfax process so they can deal with any tenant report or enquiry.
- Appropriate training and guidance on the damp process and procedures for front line Colleagues
- All relevant colleagues following the Damp and Mould Procedure
- Employing a ForHousing Lead who will oversee the inspection and delivery of all works associated with damp and mould
- Contractors and operatives being required to recognise and report damp and mould, complete works within required timescales, provide updates, record outcomes and escalate concerns where the home may not be safe.
- Regular performance reporting of the application of the Policy to EMT and the Board
- Monitoring compliance with Awaab's Law requirements, including written summaries, safety works, supplementary preventative works, alternative accommodation decisions, tenant updates and completion of works.

Monitoring, Recording, Reporting

A Power BI dashboard gives oversight of performance against KPIs and reports. There are monthly reports to Executive Management Team and quarterly to Repairs Service Excellence Group, Homes and Customer Committee. Performance Indicators have been set for reporting to EMT & Committees.

Core measures will include investigation timescales, written summary compliance, make safe completion, supplementary preventative works, temporary accommodation decisions, overdue cases, repeat reports, complaints, post-inspection outcomes and tenant satisfaction.

Learning from complaints, satisfaction surveys, Housing Ombudsman findings, internal audit, contractor performance and case reviews will be used to update procedures, training and planned investment programmes.

ForHousing will maintain accurate records of all reports, risk assessments, inspections, communications, decisions, works undertaken and outcomes to demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements. These records will demonstrate:

- Date reported
- Triage date

- Vulnerability assessment
- Investigation date
- Investigation outcome
- Written notification date
- Safety works completion date
- Alternative accommodation decision
- Preventative works completion date
- Reasons for delays, interim safety measures, revised timescales, tenant updates, offers of alternative accommodation, tenant responses and review arrangements.

ForHousing's control standard is full statutory compliance. Any risks identified will be investigated, escalated where required, and subject to timely corrective action, with appropriate oversight and reporting through the governance framework.

Related Documents

- Complaints Policy
- Self-Assessment against the Housing Ombudsman Damp and Mould Recommendations (Completed April 23 and updated January 26)
- No Access Policy
- Damp and Mould Procedure

Co-production / Tenant Insight and Engagement

Data from tenant, colleagues and operative reports of damp and mould have been used to inform our approach including process and progress to planned maintenance, in addition to responsive requests.

Approval & Review History

The approval route for the Damp & Mould Policy is SLT – EMT – Homes Committee.

Date	Version	Approved by	Detail
05/04/23	1		Original
30/04/23	2	EMT representative	Added in new process of contacting tenants 4 weeks following their damp repair being completed. DPIA approved.
30/07/24	2.1	Dtr of Assets & Sustainability	Inclusion of reasonable adjustment statement of intent.
20/05/25	2.2	Dtr of Assets & Sustainability	New template.
19/08/26	3	(SLT 14/08/26 / EMT 17/08/26) Homes Committee	Updated to strengthen our approach to Awaab's Law based on feedback from Pennington Choices and Menzies internal audit. Inclusion of table of process for emergency and significant hazards.