

# Damp and mould policy

<b>Who's this for?</b>	All colleagues and customers
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<b>Policy Owner</b>	Head of Responsive Repairs
<b>Other related documents</b>	Damp and mould procedure Repairs policy Customer care and resolution policy Compensation policy <a href="#">Housing Ombudsman Spotlight report on damp and mould</a>

# 1. Policy statement

Our purpose is to help people live in their homes comfortably. Ensuring that all settle homes are dry, warm, and healthy is a fundamental part of achieving this.

Condensation, damp, and mould can be a common concern, especially in the winter months. We recognise that it is not always a straightforward repair issue, but often a multifaceted problem which can have a profound impact on the emotional and physical wellbeing of residents. Therefore, at settle, we take a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould; we are committed to listening carefully, identifying the causes, and working with residents to resolve the problem at its root.

The practical steps we take to address damp and mould reports can be found in our [procedure](#).

# 2. Key principles

- We take a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould, assuming responsibility for resolving the problem
- Where we can easily identify the root cause of the problem, we will resolve this through our responsive repairs service
- We will provide residents with information to help them manage mould caused by condensation
- We keep residents informed and involved throughout the process
- We use data proactively to identify and address damp and mould problems
- We listen to and learn from complaints and customer feedback and use these lessons to improve the way we handle damp and mould
- We recognise the profound impact that damp and mould problems can have on the emotional and physical wellbeing of residents. As such, we consider damp and mould to be a health and safety concern and give it appropriate priority

# 3. Objectives

- To ensure that all settle customers live in dry, warm, and healthy homes
- To never dismiss damp and mould as a 'lifestyle issue' but work across teams and alongside residents to identify the causes and resolve the problem at its root.
- To make effective use of support services, such as settle plus
- To case manage complex or repeat damp and mould issues
- To use data to identify blocks or households that are most at risk of damp and mould problems, including those where energy-efficiency performance can be improved, so we can proactively take pre-emptive measures
- To use data to identify households that haven't interacted with us for a substantial amount of time and proactively reach out to these residents to see if they need any help or support

- To use modern technologies, including equipment, materials, and energy-efficient heating systems, to pre-empt and prevent damp and mould problems across all settle homes
- To use periods when our homes are empty to identify and address any existing or potential damp and mould problems, e.g., by checking ventilation, such as airbricks and extractors.

## 4. Policy actions

- Ensure all frontline colleagues have received sufficient training in spotting the early signs of damp and mould and understanding the diverse possible causes of the problem, such as overcrowding, fuel poverty or other vulnerabilities.
- Ensure clarity on which asset team colleagues have responsibility for case managing complex or repeat concerns, including follow-up calls and aftercare.
- Ensure we have a consistent approach to property inspections, (including thorough examination of the home's ventilation performance), and a consistent approach to diagnosing problems and recording detailed notes on our core system.
- Review the void standard checklist to ensure it includes sufficient proactive measures on identifying and addressing damp and mould problems in homes not in occupation.
- Introduce use of case management in QL for complex and repeat damp and mould cases, including a separate budget code.
- Build damp and mould dashboards to monitor overall number of cases and identify trends by location, property type, etc. Also use dashboards to monitor how many damp and mould-related inspections and repairs are in the WIP and how many we complete within damp and mould procedure SLAs.
- Regularly report on damp and mould cases to the building safety panel.
- Report performance (repairs, complaints, other contacts) of properties and blocks earmarked for regeneration at landlord compliance/complex case panel to understand wider picture and take proactive interim measures to ensure residents are living comfortably for the duration of regen process.
- Consult residents on our approach to handling damp and mould, including associated literature, (e.g., condensation advice leaflet).
- Reach out to all residents who haven't raised a repair with us in the last 2 years through phone calls and/or settle home visits as part of ongoing housing management offer.

## 5. Desired outcomes

- When residents raise damp and mould concerns with us, they trust us to work with them to resolve the problem and always know what the next step will be.
- We receive fewer repeat damp and mould issues.

- We understand and report on the financial cost of damp and mould problems.
- We have assurance that we're complying with all regulatory and legislative requirements, notably the Decent Homes Standard (2006), the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS, 2005) and the Homes Act (2019).

## 6. Performance indicators

- Trust score above 7.2 by 2023
- Comfort index score from 6.9 to above 7.2 by 2023
- Overall customer satisfaction >75% by April 2023
- All parts of our customer promise are met, and progress published to customers on our website every three months

## 7. Key legislation

- Decent Homes (2006)
- HHSRS (2005)
- The Homes Act (Fitness for Human Habitation) (2019)

## 8. Review

As this is a new policy, we will initially review it after one year in order to confirm it has fully embedded and to test its effectiveness. Thereafter, it will be reviewed every two years, in line with any relevant legislation or regulatory changes, or when there is a business need.