



Cassiltoun Housing Association

DAMP AND MOULD POLICY

Date Approved	Proposed Review Date
September 2023	September 2026
Chair Person/Office Bearers Signature:	

**CASSILTOUN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED
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**Cassiltoun is a registered Scottish Charity no 035544
& Registered Property Factor no PF0015**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cassiltoun Housing Association is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard, providing warm, safe, healthy, secure, high quality homes for all our tenants. This adds value to the homes and surrounding area whilst improving the quality of living for our tenants and their families.
- 1.2 Following the death of a two-year-old child in an English based Housing Association property, where the coroner cited untreated damp and mould as contributing to the child's death, the Scottish Housing Regulator acted swiftly requesting that all Scottish Housing Associations outline and evidence how they approach, mould and condensation issues, what actions are taken, and the procedure for dealing with individual reports received from tenants of condensation and mould.
- 1.3 In preparing this policy the Association recognises that the Coroner's report also stated that going forward a lesson to be learned from the tragedy is that communicating clearly with and listening to tenants around reports of damp and mould and ensuring actions taken to treat and/or prevent the causes.
- 1.4 It is estimated that up to 50% of homes in the U.K. could be affected by damp, mould growth and/or condensation. The incidences have been found to be higher in low income communities and those in social housing due to overcrowding, lack of appropriate heating, poor ventilation, lack of insulation and a lack of advice and support from landlords. This is particularly relevant during times of financial crises.
- 1.5 The Association's aim in developing this policy is to take a proactive rather than reactive approach to preventing and treating the root cause of damp and mould in our stock, ensuring that wherever possible, tenants and their families are not adversely affected by the causes of condensation, damp and mould. We will use improved recording of reports of condensation, damp or mould, to look for trends to inform investment and cyclical programmes and provide improved support, guidance, education and advice to our tenants and their families.
- 1.6 Trends will be reported by the Asset Manager through his Technical Report to the Operations and Regeneration Sub Committee.

2. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 In developing this Policy, the relevant legal and regulatory requirements were considered and taken into account. These include:-
 - Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
 - Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974
 - Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS)
 - Meet the tolerable standards
 - Be free from serious disrepair
 - Be energy efficient
 - Have modern facilities and services
 - Be healthy, safe and secure

- Energy Efficiency Standards in Social Housing (EESH 1 & 2)
- Housing Ombudsman Report – Spotlight on Damp and Mould October 2021
- Inquest report – Awaab Ishak
- Better Social Housing Review Report – December 2022

2.2 The Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect in April 2012 and reviewed 2016 and 2021. It sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Charter replaces the Performance Standards and the outcomes relevant to this Policy are:-

Outcome 1 – Equalities

Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that:

- they support the right to adequate housing
- every tenant and other customer have their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Outcome 2 – Communication

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:

- tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Outcome 3 – Participation

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:-

- tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities that make it easy for them to participate in, and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Outcome 4 – Quality of Housing

Social landlords manage their businesses so that:-

- tenants' homes, as a minimum, when they are allocated are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and any other building quality standard in place throughout the tenancy; and also meet the relevant Energy Efficiency and Zero Emission Standard.

Outcome 5 – Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements

Social landlords manage their business so that:-

- tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

Outcome 13 – Value for Money

Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that:-

- tenants', owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 In developing this policy, the Association has considered that tenants' rights to have a safe, secure, warm, comfortable and affordable home is at the heart of what we do. Therefore, the aim of this Policy is:-

- to provide and maintain warm comfortable and healthy homes, free from damp, condensation, mould or disrepair for all our tenants.
- To ensure that all tenants are treated in a fair and compassionate way, recognising that having damp or mould issues in their home can be distressing for tenants.
- To undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair works and improvements to eradicate damp and mould including managing condensation.
- To work in partnership with our tenants to resolve and understand how to reduce condensation, damp and mould issues.
- To ensure that the fabric of our homes is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from or contributing to damp and mould issues.
- To ensure that responsive repairs to alleviate damp and mould issues are undertaken as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- To ensure that tenants have access to and are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation,
- Provide staff with the required skills and testing equipment to identify and differentiate between signs of damp, condensation and mould and to recognise and understand the causes and remedial action required.
- To ensure that resources are in place to respond to the anticipated higher demand of enquiries and required inspections, including working in partnership with specialist companies for the provision of specialist survey reports, including making use of new technology such as linked environmental sensors that can be installed within problematic damp or mould homes and can be monitored on-line to better understand the cause and solution.
- To consider issues of damp, mould and condensation when designing investment programmes for example heating, insulation and ventilation.
- To maintain a register of all reported issues, with action plans, surveys and outcomes which will be reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.
- To reduce the risk of expensive legal disrepair claims and reduce the risk of reputational damage.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 In all the key areas of our business the Association needs to consider any risks that may arise. Therefore, the Association has a robust Risk Management Policy from which flows our Risk Register. The Risk Register contains any identified material risks and the mitigation action(s) for each. These are regularly reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and reported to the Board of Management and Audit and Risk Sub Committee.

The key activities that will be undertaken to mitigate the risks with respect to condensation, damp and mould are:-

- Comprehensive staff training
- Robust procedures
- Effective inspection and diagnosis
- Use of specialist contractors when required
- Provision and use of specialist equipment for accurate diagnosis and remedial works
- Educational and informative information on how to prevent dampness, mould and condensation and how to treat these effectively provided to tenants.
- Appropriate resources in place to tackle condensation, dampness and mould issues.
- Effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms in place.
- Periodic policy review to ensure compliance with all legislative requirements and regulatory and best practice guidance.

5. DAMP AND MOULD PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The Damp and Mould Procedures have been developed in line with and to ensure compliance of the Association’s Damp and Mould Policy. These are set out in a separate document and have been produced to ensure a consistent approach from all staff.

The Association will adopt a traffic light system for coding and prioritising condensation, damp and mould issues within our properties. This will also be included in the damp and mould register and the procedures.

Medium Priority	Urgent Priority	High Priority
Condensation	Damp	Mould

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

- 6.1 We recognise our pro-active role in valuing and promoting diversity, fairness, social justice and equality of opportunity by adopting and promoting fair policies and procedures. We will check this policy and associated procedures regularly for their equal opportunity implications, taking appropriate action to address inequalities likely to result or resulting from implementation of the policy and procedures. We are committed to providing fair and equal treatment to all applicants and tenants and will not discriminate against any on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, gender sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family circumstances, employment status or physical ability.
- 6.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been carried out when preparing this policy. In line with good practice the completed EIA will be published alongside this policy.
- 6.3 We do not see this policy as having any direct impact upon the protected characteristics contained within the Equality Act 2010.

7.0 PROCESSING INFORMATION – GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

- 7.1 Cassiltoun Housing Association will process information and data received in accordance with its policies and procedures relating to General Data protection Regulations and all customers and service users will be issued with a Fair Processing Notice.
- 7.2 All members of staff will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to General Data Protection Regulations and will be trained in the process the Association has introduced to ensure compliance with GDPR.

8.0 POLICY REVIEW

- 8.1 This policy will be formally reviewed every three years in consultation with staff and customers to ensure the aims of the policy are being met or sooner if legislation changes.
- 8.2 The date of the next Policy review is September 2026.