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<b>Policy:</b>	Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy
<b>Legal Requirements:</b>	The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
<b>Regulatory Standards:</b>	The Scottish Housing Regulator has set out Regulatory Standards for all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to ensure that RSLs deliver good outcomes and services for its tenants and service users through good governance and financial management.  This policy evidences that the following Regulatory Standards are being met:  Standard 1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.  Standard 2. The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.  Standard 4. The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.  Standard 5. The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.
<b>Notifiable Events Guidance:</b>	In compiling this policy, consideration has been given to the Notifiable Events Guidance issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the impact of that guidance on the policy.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	The Association is committed to Equal Opportunities and will endeavour to ensure that all services are carried out in an undiscriminating manner in line with the Association's Equality and Diversity Policy.  In particular, the Association will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.
<b>Human Rights:</b>	In compiling this policy, consideration has been given to "The Right to Adequate Housing" (Fact Sheet No. 21/Rev.1) published by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the impact of that guidance on the policy.  In particular, the Association is satisfied that this policy promotes the key aspects of the right to adequate housing – that it contains freedoms; entitlements; provides more than four walls and a roof; and protects against forced evictions.
<b>Complaints:</b>	Although the Association is committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where customers may not be satisfied with the service they have received. The Association values all complaints and uses this information to improve the services that it provides. The Association's Complaints Policy describes our complaints handling procedure and how to make a complaint.



<b>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):</b>	The Association will treat all customers' personal data in line with its obligations under the current data protection regulations and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in the Association's Fair Processing Notice.
<b>Policy Author:</b>	Kevin Freeman
<b>Policy Review:</b>	In order to ensure that any change in circumstances is accommodated this policy will be subject to review every three years in the month of March.
<b>Policy Approval:</b>	This policy was last reviewed / approved by the Management Committee of Yoker Housing Association Limited at its meeting held on Thursday the 27th of March 2025.



## Introduction

5 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) issued a letter to all social landlords on 1 December 2022 to provide advice relating to tenant safety surrounding dampness and mould. This letter was issued in response to the findings contained within the coroner's report on the tragic death of a child who died of a respiratory condition caused by the existence of mould within his home.

10 Within the letter, the SHR asked landlords to consider what systems they have in place to manage and prevent mould and dampness in tenants' homes. Specifically, the SHR stated that landlords should have "appropriate, proactive systems to identify and deal with any reported cases of mould and damp timeously and effectively".

15 Following the SHR's letter, the SHR, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH), the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and the Association of Local Authority Chief Housing Officers (COSLA) jointly produced a briefing note titled "Putting Safety First: A briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners".

20 The briefing note provides practical and useful guidance on how to prevent and treat damp and mould in properties to ensure that landlords are proactive, understanding towards their tenants and effective in resolving any underlying issues that are causing mould and damp.

This policy encompasses the main requirements set out in the briefing noted including:

- Implementation of preventative measures;
- Early intervention;
- Tackling the root cause of damp and mould;
- Ensuring complaints are dealt with appropriately and timeously;
- Ensuring ongoing monitoring of treated damp and mould to prevent a reoccurrence;
- Supporting tenants in dealing with damp and mould; and
- Ensuring robust record keeping arrangements are in place.

## Policy Aims

30 The aim of this policy is to prevent the occurrence of damp, mould and condensation within properties, but where these do occur, quickly diagnose and treat the issues appropriately. The policy also aims to ensure that the Association's properties are safe, warm and dry.

35 This policy sets out the principles for managing damp, mould and condensation in tenants homes, therefore preventing potential health and safety risks to residents.

40 This policy also details how the Association will support tenants to minimise the risk of damp, mould and condensation occurring within their homes.

## Legal and Regulatory Framework

The following represents the most relevant legislation and regulatory guidance relating to damp, mould and condensation:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004
- The Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC)
- Energy Efficiency Standards in Social Housing (EESH)



**Legal and Regulatory Framework** (continued)

This policy also considers the guidance detailed in the briefing note titled "Putting Safety First: A briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners".

**Scottish Social Housing Charter**

The Association has taken due consideration of the outcomes and standards contained within The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) in the development and implementation of this policy. The outcomes and standards that are relevant to this policy are:

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 Heat Standard.*

Outcome 5 – Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements:

Social landlords manage their businesses 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.*

**Definitions**

Mould

Mould is a natural organic compound that develops in damp conditions and grows on damp surfaces. This is often noticeable and present in situations where condensation damp is present.

Mould grows indoors in wet and moist areas that lack adequate ventilation, including walls / wallpaper, ceilings, bathroom tiles, carpets (especially those with jute backing), insulation material and wood.

Health effects of mould exposure include a runny or blocked nose, irritation of the eyes and skin and sometimes wheezing. For people with asthma, inhaling mould spores may cause an asthma attack. People may develop a severe mould infection, usually in the lungs. However, it is important to note that many people will not experience any health problems from coming into contact with mould.

Penetrating Damp

Penetrating damp is caused by water penetrating the external structure of a building or internal leaks which can cause damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structures.

Rising Damp

Rising damp is the movement of moisture from the ground that rises through the structure of the building through capillary action. Rising damp is caused by defects in the foundation of the building.



**Definitions** (continued)

Condensation Damp

5 Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air comes into contact with a cold surface and then condenses to produce water droplets.

The conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are:

- 10
- Inadequate ventilation within the property;
  - Inadequate heating;
  - Inadequate thermal insulation;
  - High humidity; and
  - Overcrowding.
- 15

**Roles and Responsibilities**

20 The Association's Director and Management Committee have overall responsibility for ensuring that adequate resources are readily available to enable the objectives of the policy to be met.

The Housing Services Manager and the Property Services Officer are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

The Association's Responsibilities

25 The Association is committed to providing and maintaining homes that are free from damp and mould and will respond quickly to address issues or reports of dampness. To achieve this the Association will:

- Implement internal procedures for dealing with issues of damp, mould and condensation. These procedures cover the handling of reports of mould and dampness received from tenants, staff or contractors to ensure that these are dealt with promptly.
  - Monitor the condition of the Association's stock through stock condition surveys, estate management inspections, void inspections and tenant visits.
  - Implement the necessary cyclical and planned maintenance contracts to ensure that properties are maintained to reduce the risk of dampness and mould occurring.
  - Undertake property inspections when reports of suspected damp, mould or condensation are received .
  - Thoroughly investigate the cause of damp, mould and condensation and carry out the necessary remedial repairs.
  - Undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation dampness. This may include measures such as upgrading ventilation systems or the installation of wall insulation.
  - Inform residents of the findings of any investigations following report of damp, mould and condensation and keep them updated regarding the remedial works required and potential timescales.
  - Carry out follow up inspections with tenants following the completion of remedial works.
  - Promote and provide comprehensive advice and guidance to tenants on how to control and prevent the occurrence of damp, mould or condensation in properties.
  - Ensure that staff are aware of the terms of this policy and any associated procedures.
  - Ensure that staff received receive the necessary training on how to effectively deal with complaints of damp, mould and condensation.
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**Roles and Responsibilities** (continued)

Tenant Responsibilities

5 In accordance with the terms of their tenancy agreement, tenants have a responsibility to report any repairs to the Association. This includes any evidence of mould, rising or penetrating damp, faulty or damaged equipment or fittings that will affect the levels of moisture or humidity in their property.

10 Tenants are also responsible for:

- Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum (e.g. covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside or opening a window when cooking or bathing).
- Adequately heating their property.
- Keeping their property well ventilated (e.g. opening windows during cooking / bathing, using the extractor or fan or ventilation system installed in the property, keeping trickle vents in windows open and allowing air to circulate around furniture).
- Following advice and guidance issued by the Association on managing humidity and moisture in their property to help reduce the incidence of condensation.
- Allowing access for inspections and any necessary remedial works.
- Seeking permission from the Association if they wish to carry out alterations or improvements to the property.

**Advice and Guidance**

25 The Association uses the following methods to provide residents with advice and guidance regarding the prevention and management of damp, mould and condensation:

- Providing information on the Association's website in relation to damp, mould and condensation.
- Providing information in the Association's newsletters in relation to damp, mould and condensation.
- Providing new tenants with the Association's Guide to Mould, Dampness and Condensation at tenancy sign up.
- Carry out full property inspections when undertaking tenant visits noting any signs of damp, mould and condensation on the Property Inspection Register and arranging the necessary repairs.
- Sign-posting tenants to appropriate support agencies (e.g. to energy advisors or money advice to assist with issues of fuel poverty).

**Contractors**

35 The Association will ensure that suitably qualified contractors are employed when addressing remedial works required in relation to damp, mould and condensation. Contractors carrying out work to the Association's properties will take care not to damage a tenants personal belongings.

40 Where required, the Association will employ suitably qualified consultants to carry out property inspections and oversee necessary remedial works.

**Void Properties**

45 Where evidence of damp, mould or condensation is noted is noted within void properties, the necessary repair works will be carried out during the void period and rectified prior to the property being re-let.

As part of the void process the following checks will be undertaken:

- Inspection of all extract fans to ensure that they operate correctly;
- Servicing of the boiler to ensure that the heating operates correctly; and
- Inspection of all windows to ensure that they open correctly and to ensure that trickle vents operate correctly.



**Responding to Reports of Damp, Mould and Condensation**

Cases of damp, mould and condensation may be received from tenants, staff or contractors. All reports will be recorded on the Repair Log and classified as either 'dampness' or 'condensation' depending on the nature of the issue.

Reports of damp, mould or condensation will be taken seriously and not treated as a lifestyle problem caused by the tenant. When receiving reports staff will complete a questionnaire that will be used to establish whether any households are at greater risk of ill health owing to the issue. The questionnaire will be used to determine if there are any vulnerable people who may be at increased risk of illness resulting from damp and mould. Examples of those who are vulnerable include young children, elderly and disabled people or those who suffer from lung conditions, compromised immune systems or suffer from other health conditions that may make them more susceptible to illness resulting from the presence of damp and mould.

All properties will be inspected by either staff or an appropriate contractor within two-working days of the issue being reported. The Association will use the information collected during the inspection and completion of the questionnaire to assess the severity of the case. Cases will be classified as follows:

- **Low** – Very minor or localised areas of damp or mould and no identified vulnerability within the household. Examples of localised damp or mould include areas around windows or small areas on bathroom walls or ceilings.
- **Moderate** – Multiple areas of extensive damp and / or mould growth in areas such as cupboards or uninhabited spaces / some low level resident risk factor such as the very young or elderly but no specific vulnerabilities.
- **Serious** – Multiple areas of extensive damp and / or mould growth in main living areas / Dampness and mould highly visible on surfaces / levels of vulnerability present such as young and elderly residents with vulnerabilities that exacerbate risk.
- **Severe** – Extensive damp and mould in multiple living areas / highly vulnerable residents / very young and elderly residents with chronic or vulnerability factors.

At the first point of contact, the Association will establish if the report relates to a new issue or has been reported previously. If the issue has been reported previously, the Association will re-open the case and treat the issue as a continuation.

The Association aims to resolve damp and mould cases as a 'first-time fix'. However, there may be occasions where cases are more complex or specialist that require a programme of work and / or monitoring.

In all cases reported, the Association aims to have all remedial works carried out within twenty-eight days of the report being received.

In 'Serious' and 'Severe' cases the Association will act immediately with a view to addressing the problem as quickly as possible.

Where it is unsafe for residents to remain in the property while works are being carried out, alternative temporary accommodation will be made available. This may be on a day-to-day basis or as a decant to an alternative property. Staff will support tenants through this process by assisting them in finding either temporary or alternative accommodation.

Contractors will leave good internal surfaces after works have been completed, ensuring that surfaces are prepared to a condition ready for the tenant to redecorate.

On completion of repair works the Association will arrange a follow-up visit to check that the issue has been resolved. Follow-up visits will take place within six weeks of any treatment or remedial works being completed. The tenant will be asked to report any further issues that arise following completion of the repair works.

Association staff will arrange with the tenant to visit their property within six weeks of repair works being carried out. Details of the visit will be recorded on the Property Inspection Register.

**Assisting Tenants**

All new tenants will, at the point of sign-up, be provided with information regarding the risks of damp, mould and condensation and the steps they should take to limit the risk within their property. This information is also included within the Resident Handbook, newsletters and on the 'Tenant Health & Safety' section of the Association's website.



**Assisting Tenants** (continued)

5 In cases where repeated decoration is required, the Association may offer a decoration allowance based on the rates stipulated in the Association's Decoration Allowance or Void Properties Policy. In cases where largescale works are required, the Association may arrange for a contractor to decorate the areas affected.

**Training**

10 The Association is responsible for ensuring that staff are adequately trained in damp, mould and condensation issues to ensure that such issues are recorded and addressed in an appropriate and timeous manner.

**Recording and Monitoring**

15 Details of all property inspections carried out by staff, consultants and contractors should be recorded on the Property Inspection Register. This Register records the following information:

- The date of inspection;
- Who carried out the inspection;
- Whether or not damp, mould or condensation was observed; and
- Comments in relation to repairs / remedial action.

20 By logging details of inspections on the Property Inspection Register, the Association will be able to:

- Identify a history of damp, mould or condensation within individual properties;
- Identify trends in relation to the incidence of damp, mould or condensation in particular property types and locations;
- When issues of damp, mould or condensation occurred;
- Whether issues of damp, mould or condensation reoccur following the completion of repair works.

25 All repair issues reported are recorded on the Repair Log. The information recorded on the Repair Log allows the Association to measure:

- The number of resolved cases and damp, mould and condensation;
- The average length of time taken to resolve cases of damp, mould and condensation;
- The number of cases that have been re-opened;
- The number of open cases of damp, mould and condensation at the end of each year.

30 All reports of damp, mould and condensation, irrespective of who reports them to the Association must be recorded on the repair log.