



Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy

Policy Ref: PS12

Prepared By	Operations Director
Date of Review	October 2024 (new)
Date of Next Review	October 2027
Reviewed By	Investment Committee

1. Introduction – Objectives and Scope

Partick Housing Association (PHA) is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that our tenants live in homes that are free from damp, mould and condensation.

Our primary objectives of this policy are to maintain our properties to a high standard and minimise the risk of incidence of damp, mould and condensation.

We want to ensure that as far as possible damp, mould and condensation do not occur. However if they occur, they should be rapidly detected, effectively contained, and quickly addressed through the delivery of our repairs/ maintenance and other services.

This Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy applies to all premises and dwellings which are to any extent under the control of (PHA) as a landlord, service provider and employer – this includes our homes, blocks and other properties we own and manage.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that staff members are aware of and understand this policy and any subsequent revisions.

To provide a safe environment, damp and mould arrangements must ensure that suitable and sufficient damp and mould measures are in place. We will aim to:

- take every reasonable precaution to ensure the health and safety of our tenants and residents through maintaining our properties and delivering an effective repair and maintenance service;
- provide warm and healthy homes, reducing occurrences of damp and mould to the lowest practicable level;
- have effective systems in place for identifying and reporting damp, mould and condensation in a timely manner and keeping tenants informed;
- provide relevant information and guidance to tenants and residents to assist them in preventing damp, mould and condensation <<www.partickha.org.uk>>;
- have effective systems in place to record, address and review incidences of damp, mould and condensation; and
- comply with legal duties, regulatory requirements and good practice standards.

2. Definitions

- a) Rising damp: The movement of moisture from the ground rising through the structure of the building through capillary action.
- b) Penetrating damp (including internal leaks): Water penetrating the external structure of the building or internal leaks causing damp, rot and damage to internal surfaces and structure.
- c) Condensation damp: Moisture in warm air coming into contact with a cold surface and condensing, producing water droplets.

d) Mould: Very small spores which thrive in conditions produced by condensation and will grow in any places with a lot of moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows or pipes, where there has been flooding. Mould grows well on paper, cardboard, and wood products. It can grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, plasterwork, carpets, fabric and upholstery. Mould spores exist in the air, will spread very quickly in a suitable habitat to produce more spores.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 PHA

The PHA Board is responsible for the conduct of the business of the organisation.

PHA's Board, Leadership Team and Management Team recognise that health and safety is a fundamental part of the safe, efficient and effective delivery of service.

There are key legislative and statutory requirements as well as guidance, which relate to how we manage damp, mould and condensation. Staff need to be aware of these and any relevant revisions so they apply and follow current legislation, regulations and guidance.

The Health & Safety Panel meets quarterly, with its remit and agenda aligned to focus on the Scottish Housing Regulator's priorities in relation to tenant and resident health and safety. As such, the Panel's focus is on providing assurance on our compliance with relevant safety requirements, including gas safety; electrical safety; water safety; fire safety; asbestos; damp and mould; and lift safety.

This Damp, Mould & Condensation Policy is linked to a series of related PHA policies, including:

- Health & Safety Policy;
- Gas Servicing Policy;
- Electrical Inspections Policy;
- Water Safety Policy;
- Fire Safety Policy;
- Asbestos Management Policy;
- Lift Safety Policy;
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy;
- Void Management Policy;
- Estate Management Policy;
- Risk Management Policy; and
- Training & Development Policy.

Overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice rests with the Chief Executive who delegates key tasks to the Operations Director who is responsible for day-to-day oversight of the implementation of the policy and associated procedures.

PHA is committed to our responsibilities as a good employer and attaining a high standard of health and safety performance in the delivery of services. This will be achieved by:

- creating and maintaining a positive health and safety culture which ensures the commitment and participation of all staff;
- meeting our responsibilities to staff, to other persons, and to the environment in a way which recognises that legal requirements are the minimum standard; and
- adopting a planned and systematic approach to the implementation of PHA's Health & Safety Policy.

3.2 Tenants

We will provide information and guidance to tenants and residents on damp, mould and condensation and ask them to check regularly and report immediately any incidences, which we will follow up.

They should report faulty equipment that could hamper the control of damp, mould and condensation, e.g. faulty extractor fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating, etc.

Where we have carried out remedial works, tenants should not decorate the affected area for at least six months so we can monitor and review the situation and take further action if required.

4. Our Approach

a) Managing reports of damp, mould and condensation

When we receive a report of damp, mould or condensation, we will record this as a specific 'DMC' repair type on our case management system/ dampness register.

Staff receiving such a report must establish if there are any household members with particular vulnerabilities that might put them at greater risk of ill health. This must be recorded and the case prioritised accordingly.

b) Effective inspection and diagnosis

Our staff will have the necessary skills to identify and differentiate between signs of damp and condensation, the causes and remedies.

We will use our property and tenancy records to identify those homes at greatest risk of developing problems with damp, mould and condensation.

We will inspect all 'DMC' cases reported. We will use appropriate technology and if necessary may seek input from specialist consultants to fully understand the causes and remedies.

We will assess the problem, including the vulnerability of household members, categorise/ prioritise the issue and record information on our case management system/ dampness register. We will update the tenant on what we plan to do.

c) Case and data management

We will log and manage all DMC cases through our housing system, whether reported by tenants or identified by staff. We will track progress with cases through the system and use of case management reports to provide assurance on progress as well as identify any trends or themes that we need to address. Our Property Services Manager is responsible and accountable for oversight of all DMC cases managed by our Maintenance Officers.

We will categorise DMC cases as follows:

- **Category 1:** Source of damp/ mould is identified – instruct remedial action and monitor situation.
- **Category 2:** Source of damp/ mould is not identified on first visit – follow up and instruct a more detailed or invasive survey.
- **Category 3:** Problem is ongoing – the source has not been identified following survey or remedial action has not been successful, so regularly monitor and review.

The Property Services Manager will use our monitoring system to record the suspected source of the problem and actions taken, including escalation where necessary.

At first point of contact, we will establish if this is a new complaint or if it has been reported previously. If it has been reported previously we will reopen and treat this as a continuation. We will issue orders to our contractors for the likes of defective plumbing or water penetration reports, but we will note these on our DMC monitoring system so our Maintenance Officer can follow up and check progress with any remedial action.

We will aim to resolve damp and mould cases as a 'first-time fix'. However there can be occasions where such cases are more complex or specialist, so we will need to programme and monitor cases accordingly.

d) Remedial action

Our Maintenance Officer will seek to identify the cause of the damp, mould or condensation occurring and instruct appropriate remedial works.

Where we are dealing with Category 2 or Category 3 cases we will advise the tenant of how we plan to follow up to investigate or monitor the situation further.

In minor instances of condensation we will give the tenant appropriate advice about how to mitigate and manage this situation. Where there is associated mould growth we may issue a mould eradication removal and prevention kit for the tenant to treat the issue themselves. We will carry out a follow up inspection to check and confirm that no further remedial works are required.

Where there is severe or recurring damp, mould or condensation this might result in a range of actions depending upon the circumstances.

We will keep tenants informed of any property inspections and diagnosis of issues as well as explaining and timing of works where access is required.

For more complex cases, especially where more intrusive building work is required and/ or a serious risk to household health and safety, we may require the tenant to move out of their home temporarily or permanently. We will look to minimise disruption to tenants, mitigate risk, consider the specific circumstances of each case and discuss our proposed course of action.

We will take all reasonable steps to invest in our properties to mitigate any risks of damp and mould so that they comply with SHQS, EESSH or other relevant standards.

We understand that some tenants may struggle to heat their home adequately. We will refer such cases to our Money Advice Officer to explore opportunities to maximise household income and referral to third parties agencies that can offer specialist energy advice and support, etc.

5. Training

PHA is responsible for ensuring that staff are adequately trained in damp, mould and condensation issues. We provide appropriate training for relevant staff on this policy and any related processes and procedures. We keep records of all training provided.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Investment Committee every three years or sooner if required by statutory or regulatory requirements.

Legislation & Statutory Requirements, including:

- Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, 2006, 2010 & 2014
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 2002
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 and Code of Conduct 2011
- Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015
- The Building (Scotland) Regulations & Building Standards 2017
- Scottish Housing Regulator Regulatory Framework 2024
- Tolerable Standard
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)
- Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH)
- Repairing Standard
- Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement
- Regulated Tenancies
- Short Assured Tenancy Agreement

Guidance, including:

- BS 5250 (control of condensation in buildings), 2021
- The Social Housing Safety Network Scotland: Damp & Mould
- EVH Landlord Safety Manual