



PEAKS & PLAINS
Housing Trust

The Trust

Damp & Mould Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust aims to provide safe and warm homes to all our customers. However, we acknowledge that sometimes things can go wrong, and damp, mould and condensation issues may occur for various reasons. This policy outlines what we will do to put things right.
- 1.2 Our damp and mould policy forms a part of our overall repairs service. This wider service is explained in our Repairs Policy which can be found on our website.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy outlines how Peaks and Plains (the Trust) will manage reports, communication and associated works associated with damp, mould, and condensation, ensuring that customers are dealt with fairly and consistently.
- 2.2 Damp, mould and condensation are issues which can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of our customers, and cause damage to homes. The Trust will ensure that it adheres to the legal requirements for any cases that are governed by Awaab's Law 2025.

3. LEGAL & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 The Damp and Mould Policy will enable the Trust to meet its legal and regulatory requirements which include;
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 – Section 11
 - Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
 - Decent Homes Standard (2006)
 - Regulator of Social Housing's Safety & Quality Standard
 - Awaab's Law (2025) — setting strict investigation, communication and repair timescales for damp and mould hazards
 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 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. The cause can be the result of, for example:

- Water ingress due to defective or poor original design/workmanship of the structure.
- Defective components for example roof coverings, external wall doors and windows.

- Defective or blocked rainwater gutters and pipes.
- Defective or leaking internal waste pipes, hot and cold water and heating systems
- Flooding due to burst pipes.

c) Condensation Damp

Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air meets a cold surface and then condenses producing water droplets. This can take two main forms:

- Surface condensation arising when the inner surface of the structure is cooler than the room air.
- Condensation inside the structure (interstitial) where vapour pressure forces water vapour through porous materials (e.g. walls), which then condenses when it reaches colder conditions within the structure.

The conditions that **can increase the risk of condensation** are:

- Inadequate ventilation e.g., natural opening windows and trickle/background vents and mechanical extraction in bathrooms and kitchens.
- Inadequate heating e.g., undersized boilers and radiators, draught stripping
- Inadequate thermal insulation. e.g., Missing or defective wall and loft insulation
- High humidity e.g., presence of rising and penetrating damp.
- Poor building design and construction – specific cold areas (bridging) which are integral with the building construction.

Conditions that **can lead to condensation** are:

- Poor ventilation – not opening windows, blocking up vents, not turning on extract fans, not allowing air to circulate around furniture.
- Poor heating – not heating the house which can be a result of fuel poverty
- Defective insulation – dislodged insulation in lofts.
- High humidity - not covering pans when cooking and drying laundry inside the house can contribute to this.
- Overcrowding.

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

5. POLICY AIMS

5.1 The policy aims to assist in the delivery of a damp, mould and condensation service that will be able to:

- Proactively manage damp, mould, and condensation risks across all Trust homes, including communal spaces
- Provide clarity for customers and staff on our approach and expected service levels
- Ensure homes remain well maintained, healthy, and free from hazards that could affect customer safety

- Build internal expertise, guidance, and processes to address root causes effectively
- Deliver assistance to residents, including support relating to fuel or food poverty where appropriate
- Fulfil Awaab's Law statutory timeframes regarding investigations, written communication, and repairs
- Ensure consistent, fair and empathetic treatment for all customers

6. PREVENTION

- 6.1 The Trust will take action to identify homes that have, or may be at risk of developing problems with damp and mould. The Trust will use data on our customers and homes to help us understand the risk profile in relation to damp and mould.
- 6.2 The Trust will seek to mitigate any increased risks of damp and mould arising as a result of our work to decarbonise our homes.
- 6.3 When a property becomes vacant, and prior to re-letting, the Trust will seek to identify and remedy any issues which may cause damp. This may include ensuring doors and windows are serviceable and can effectively ventilate the property, ensuring extractor fans are working well, as well as applying mould treatments where necessary.
- 6.4 The Trust will provide information via platforms such as our website or written communications to raise awareness about the causes of damp and mould. This will include details about how everyday activities in the home can generate condensation and what customers can do to help prevent damp through, for instance, ventilation, controlling the build-up of moisture and adequate heating. Where there is mould growth, we will provide advice on how this should be treated.
- 6.5 The Trust staff and contractors will have the skills and knowledge to identify signs of damp and mould and provide guidance to customers on how to manage the problem. Staff will be encouraged to look out for signs whenever they visit a customer's home.

7. RESPONDING TO DAMP & MOULD AND COMPLIANCE WITH AWAAB'S LAW

- 7.1 We encourage customers to report any concerns through the Trust's contact centre, website, newsletters, signup information, or during home visits.
- All severe hazards related to damp, mould or condensation will be responded to in line with the timeframes stated with the classification of Awaab's law.
- 7.2 Work in partnership with customers to understand, reduce, and resolve issues.
- 7.3 Identify whether anyone in the household may be particularly vulnerable to health impacts, which will enable the Trust to triage appropriately to determine the prioritisation of works.

- 7.4 People at increased risk include but is not limited to:
- Disabled household members
 - Children under 15
 - Older adults
 - People with asthma, COPD or other respiratory/lung conditions
 - Individuals with cardiovascular disease
 - People with weakened immune systems (e.g., cancer treatment)
 - Pregnant women
 - Residents with mental health conditions
 - Anyone housebound or with reduced mobility
- 7.5 Provide early and accurate diagnosis, identifying root causes and resolving hazards within legally mandated timeframes categorised accordingly within the HHSRS criteria relating to Awaab’s Law.
- 7.6 Encourage colleagues to report signs of damp, mould, or condensation through training, intranet updates, and team briefings.
- 7.7 Make reasonable attempts to gain access for inspections and repairs.
- 7.8 Make reasonable adjustments to support individual customer needs, in line with our reasonable adjustments policy.
- 7.9 Where work is carried out to treat damp, mould and condensation results in damage to the internal decoration of a property we will make good internal surfaces, ensuring they are prepared to a condition ready for the customer to redecorate.
- 7.10 Complete remedial works and then conduct follow up checks within 6 months of damp, mould or condensation works being completed.
- 7.11 All severe hazards related to damp, mould or condensation will be responded to in line with the timeframes stated within the classification of Awaab’s law.

Timescales		
Potential Emergency hazard	24 Hours	24 hours to investigate and undertake relevant safety work or customer is placed in suitable alternative accommodation
Emergency Hazard- Summary of investigation and conclusion	3 working days	Written summary of findings provided to customer following conclusion of investigation. * Unless all works to make home safe and prevent reoccurrence are completed and customer notified as such.
Potential Significant hazard investigation and conclusion	10 working days	Investigate potential significant hazard- Written summary to customer within 3 working days from the conclusion. * Unless all works to make home safe and prevent reoccurrence are completed and customer notified as such.
Significant Hazard relevant safety works	5 working days	Undertake relevant safety works Within 5 working days of the investigation concluding.
Significant Hazard- Completion of supplementary works	Within 12 weeks	Where steps cannot be taken to begin work within 5 days, this must be done as soon as possible, work to physically start and complete within 12 weeks.

8. SUPPORT

- 8.1 The Trust will give customers advice on how to prevent damp and what they should do to remove mould. However, the Trust recognise that not every resident will be able to resolve damp and mould themselves. We will provide appropriate support in such cases in relation to the specific circumstances and the individual customer's needs.
- 8.2 The Trust know that some customers cannot afford to heat their homes adequately due to their income levels. The Trust will work with customers to ensure that they are receiving the income to which they are entitled, making referrals as necessary.
- 8.3 Where homes are overcrowded humidity will tend to be higher and this increases the likelihood of condensation. The Trust will work with the customer and explore solutions which may include the customer moving to a more suitable home if this is available and appropriate.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 9.1 The Board and Executive Team have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Trust has the relevant policies in place and ensuring that they are adhered to.
- 9.2 The Assistant Director of Assets, Development & Compliance has overall responsibility for the policy, ensuring that it is fully implemented.
- 9.3 The Head of Repairs & Maintenance is responsible for:
- The effective implementation and delivery of the policy
 - Monitoring the performance and delivery
 - Reviewing the policy.
- 9.4 The Maintenance Manager (Repairs) & Asset Manager are responsible for:
- Developing the processes and procedures that are in line with the policy.
 - Ensure that the policy aims are adhered to.
- 9.5 Customers are responsible for:
- Regularly checking for damp and immediately reporting it to the Trust, evidence of rising and penetrating damp and any faulty equipment that will hamper the management and control of damp and condensation (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating etc.) in accordance with the tenancy agreement conditions.
 - Regularly checking for mould and to clean signs of mould as soon as they are discovered. Manage condensation damp following the Trust's guidance, and report issues as soon as they are apparent.
 - Reporting repairs to the Trust including items such as extractor fans or faulty windows.

- 9.6 The leaseholder is responsible for:
- Understanding and assessing any form of damp and/or mould present within the property.
 - Managing and maintaining their property including damp and condensation in accordance with their lease agreement.
 - Commissioning surveys and reports to identify and confirm cause of damp.
 - If the damp issue is related to the structure or fabric of the building, then this will be the responsibility of the Trust.
- 9.7 The Trust will not attribute damp and mould to lifestyle without robust evidence and will always investigate related causes first.
- 9.8 All PPHT staff and sub-contractors have a responsibility when visiting any property to look for, and report any signs of damp, mould and condensation or any repairs required to prevent it.

10. MONITORING, EVALUATION & REPORTING

- 10.1 Damp, mould & condensation performance will be closely monitored and shared with respective areas and the Trust's Leadership team monthly. A bi-annual summary review of the Trust's position will be presented to the Executive Team and resident led Challenge Group. An annual report on performance will be presented to the Trust's Board.

11. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- 11.1 The Trust recognise and value the diversity of our communities. The Trust aim to reduce barriers to ensure that everyone has equal access to our services and are committed to treating everyone fairly, complying with all relevant legislation under the Equality Act 2010.
- 11.2 The Trust will offer practical support for customers who may otherwise find it difficult to access our services or adhere to customer responsibilities.
- 11.3 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken for this policy, and any issues have been addressed as part of this documentation. The EIA has been reviewed by the EDI forum and the Executive Management Team.

12. DATA PROTECTION

- 12.1 The Trust recognises that confidentiality is important to customers and will ensure all performance reporting information is anonymised and is compliant with UK GDPR good practice.

13. CONSULTATION

- 13.1 The Trust's Challenge Group and Customer Damp & Mould Panel were consulted with regard to shaping a wider consultation exercise.

13.2 The policy has been through consultation with the Trusts management and senior leadership team.

14. FUTURE REVIEWS

14.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner in response to a change in regulation/legislation, feedback from audit recommendations or emerging best practice.

15. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents.

- Asset Management Strategy
- Repairs Policy
- Repairs Service Standard
- Leaseholder Management Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Reasonable Adjustment Policy
- Vulnerable persons policy
- Allocations Policy
- Transfer Policy
- Decant Policy
- Empty Property Policy

16. POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Name:	Damp & Mould Policy
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Approved by:	Executive Management Team
Drafted By:	Jack Rostern – Head of Repairs & Maintenance
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