



Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

Manningham Housing Association (MHA) owns and manages over 1400 homes in Bradford, Keighley, and Craven. We specialise (but not exclusively) in providing large family homes to meet the needs of the local South Asian Communities. Most of our properties are large family homes, often occupied by multi-generational households.

MHA is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard which adds value to the homes and their surroundings. Maintaining high quality, secure homes can improve the lives of our customers and achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. Our homes give people the space and security to create meaningful lives and the foundation to build the best possible life.

This policy has been written to ensure that wherever possible, residents are not adversely affected by the causes of damp, mould and condensation and provides for a proactive approach to manage reports of damp, mould, and condensation.

This policy and associated procedure will consider, and address recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – Oct 2021 and the subsequent advice and the Guidance from the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities issued in September 2023.

2. Causes

Mould is a type of fungus. It spreads through spores, which are invisible to the naked eye but are in the air around us all the time and can quickly grow on surfaces where dampness persists, or water has formed into a visible covering.

Dampness is an excess of moisture that can't escape from a structure, which can also go on to cause significant damage to the building such as collapsed ceilings and rotten timber elements such as windows and doors.

There are four main causes of dampness in homes in England. It is important to understand the difference between them because they each need different solutions.

Condensation damp

Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

Penetrating damp

Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.

Rising damp

Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the buildings in contact with the ground (walls and floors); it is usually found in older properties and is often misdiagnosed. It can be identified through visual inspection; however chemical testing is the most appropriate way of confirming it. Often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.

Traumatic damp

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding.

3. Legislation and Regulation

MHA will meet all our statutory and regulatory obligations. These include:

- Housing Act 2004
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Decent Homes Standard
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Right to Acquire guidance
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Tenancy Agreement (agreed between MHA and its tenant)
- Equality Act 2010
- Regulator of Social Housing Home Standard
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards

4. Scope of Policy

This document should be used by all employees, customers, and stakeholders of MHA to understand the obligations placed upon the association to respond to reports of damp, mould, and condensation. The policy applies to all buildings managed and owned by MHA where we have a responsibility to maintain them.

5. Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy is to provide clear lines of responsibility within MHA in the management of damp, mould, and condensation. At MHA we want to develop a zero-tolerance approach to reports of damp, mould and condensation and ensure all cases are responded to and addressed quickly and efficiently.

6. Policy Statement

- All reports of damp, mould and condensation will be fully investigated, and an inspection undertaken by a suitably trained member of the MHA Team or, if required, an external specialist. This includes properties that are undergoing the Right to Acquire or Mutual Exchange Process.
- A report of Damp and Mould will be inspected within 5 working days, and works will commence within 21 days of the initial report.
- The reports will be risk assessed and categorised as either Urgent (Meeting the criteria of a Category 1 Hazard HHSRS, defined as being where the most serious harm is identified), Significant or Low Risk. Tenant vulnerabilities will be considered as part of this assessment process.
- Urgent cases will be responded to within 24 hours and made safe, Significant cases will be inspected, and works will commence within 7 calendar days. Low Risk cases will be inspected within 14 calendar days and initial remedial works will commence within 21 Calendar days of the date of the first report.

- Where works are unable to be completed within the above timescales due to the extent of the works, specialist contractor availability or tenant access needs, we will remove any mould and apply a preventative surface coating to remove the initial hazard, and works will be programmed to commence at the earliest practical date.
- The tenant will be kept informed of progress in their case throughout the rectification process, including if the 24 hour, 7 and 21 calendar day targets are at risk of not being achieved.
- The inspection findings and a plan of action will be issued to the tenant.
- All works will be inspected after 6 weeks of completion. If there is no evidence of recurrence, the case will be closed, if there is still evidence of damp and/ or mould we will undertake a further risk assessment and the cause will be reinvestigated.
- We will take a “case based” approach to reports of damp and mould. Where we need our customer’s support in reducing mould growth we will work with our customers until we are satisfied that the problem has been resolved. We will provide clear and easy to understand information for tenants to support reduction of any condensation related problems in their home. This information will be available in different languages where necessary.
- In extreme circumstances, such as health reasons, the re-housing of customers may be discussed with our housing management team. This may include decanting on a temporary/permanent arrangement or offer of hotel accommodation if the move is for a short period of time.
- We will make three attempts to access an affected property. Should access not be achieved we will consider applying for an injunction to gain access.
- The Process is attached as Appendix A to this Policy

A separate procedure will sit alongside this policy to ensure the scope and aims of this policy are met.

7. Supporting our tenants

Manningham Housing Association is a specialist BAME housing provider, providing large family homes. Cooking for large families, more use of showering/bathing etc can exacerbate mould growth due to high levels of condensation.

We will give residents advice on how to prevent damp and what they should do to remove mould. This advice and information will be available in different ways including our website, tenant newsletters and leaflets. However, we 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.

We know that some residents cannot afford to heat their homes adequately due to their income levels. We will work with residents to ensure that they are receiving the income to which they are entitled.

Where homes are overcrowded humidity will tend to be higher and this increases the likelihood of condensation. We will work with the tenant and explore solutions which may include the tenant moving to a more suitable home if this is available and appropriate.

8. Equality and Diversity

As Bradford’s only Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) housing association, MHA is actively committed to promoting and embedding a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion. MHA is an organisation which values differences and enables individuals to be their authentic selves.

Our aims are for the organisation to be a leading voice for BAME communities, to be truly representative of all sections of the society and communities we serve, and for each member of our staff, residents, and other stakeholders to feel respected and valued.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

MHA is committed to protecting the rights of individuals privacy with regards to the processing of personal data and any information we hold about them. We demonstrate this through operating within the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 ("The Act") with regards to collecting, storing, processing, divulging, sharing, and disposing of personal information that relates to a living individual who can be identified.

10. Monitoring and Review

We will monitor and review this policy in conjunction with residents to ensure its effectiveness and relevance to the Association's stated aims and objectives. The Director of Operations has overall responsibility for the on-going monitoring of this policy through the work of frontline staff, particularly those engaged in property maintenance and housing management.

The policy and procedure will be reviewed every three years or sooner if needed due to statutory, regulatory, or good practice requirement.

Policy Name	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
Equality Impact Assessment Completed	Yes
Date Last Approved by the Committee	July 2024
Date to be Reviewed by the Board	July 2024
Next Date to be Reviewed by the Committee	July 2027
Lead Officer	Head of Property Services