

gentoo



Damp and Mould

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For support and advice regarding the policy, please contact the Policy Owner. For queries on the policy register, please contact the Governance Team.

Contents

Policy Statement	5
Our commitment to our customers	5
Proactive identification of damp or mould	5
Listening to and empathising with our customers	5
Case management	5
Competence and professionalism	6
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging	6
 Scope, Escalation and Monitoring	 7
Scope 7	
Escalation	7
Monitoring	8
 Core Purpose, Vision and Themes	 8
 Regulation and Legislation	 9
 Roles and Responsibilities	 9
 Associated Procedures and Processes	 11
 Policy Detail	 11
Categorising the prevalence of damp or mould	11
Proactive identification of damp or mould	12
Stock condition surveys	13
Empty homes	13
All visits to customer's properties	14
Analysis of data	14
Responding to reports of damp or mould	15
Case management	16
Investigating the prevalence of damp or mould	18
Managing remedial actions	19
Access	20
	3

After-care	20
Quality assurance and quality control	21
Information and advice for customers	21
Information, instruction and training for colleagues	22
Information, instruction and training for contractors	23
Considering damp or mould during planned investment and the construction of new homes	23
Complaints	24
Board and Committee Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	24
Audit and Assurance	25
Records	25
Version Control	26

Policy Statement

Our commitment to our customers

- The health and safety of our customers is our number one priority. We believe everyone has the right to live safely and comfortably in their home. We are committed to working with our customers to prevent damp and mould in our properties and to resolve it when it does occur. By this we mean taking a proactive approach to understanding how damp or mould may occur in our properties and taking the necessary steps to deal with problems reported to us by our customers.
- It is important for us to have a policy and strategy that gives our customers confidence in how we manage damp and mould in our properties. Our damp and mould strategy is based on four core principles:

Proactive identification of damp or mould

- We seek to proactively identify damp and mould in our properties to avoid relying solely on our customers telling us about problems in their homes. We do this through our ongoing programme of stock condition surveys, taking a data-led, proactive approach to identify damp trends across our properties, and making sure our empty homes are free of damp or mould before they are re-let.

Listening to and empathising with our customers

- We know how important it is to listen to and empathise with our customers. We treat each customer who tells us about damp or mould in their property with respect and we do not apportion blame on our customers. We seek to understand the circumstances of each customer who tells us they have damp or mould in their property and support them as much as we can. We work together with our customers to provide practical information and advice on how they can manage the environment within their home to help prevent damp or mould occurring. We seek to learn from the complaints we receive from our customers to help prevent damp or mould occurring.

Case management

- We know it can be frustrating for our customers when they have to deal with several people to resolve an issue in their home. Our Case Management Team oversee each case of damp or mould in our properties which is categorised as an emergency or significant hazard in accordance with the The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 (Awaabs Law).

- They act as the main point of contact for our customers and ensure all our colleagues and contractors co-operate and co-ordinate to resolve each case. They provide an after-care service so that we keep in touch with our customers after resolving each case to make sure problems with damp or mould don't reoccur.
- Reports of damp or mould that do not meet the criteria for case management shall be managed through the Group's standard damp and mould repairs process. These cases shall be subject to triage, inspection, investigation and remedial action in accordance with the requirements of this policy and the relevant procedures. Where circumstances change or increased risk is identified, the case shall be escalated into formal case management arrangements.

Competence and professionalism

- We ensure our colleagues and contractors have the right training to do their jobs to a high standard and help us manage damp and mould in our properties. We expect all our colleagues and contractors to be professional when helping our customers and to do everything they can to solve problems with damp and mould for our customers.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

- We are committed to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging throughout the organisation and aim to:
 - Treat everyone equally, fairly, and with respect.
 - Provide fair and equitable outcomes for colleagues and customers.
 - Welcome and value difference and not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any individual or groups.
 - Challenge the behaviour of those who do not uphold our values and go against our principles.
 - Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, dismissal, redundancy, leave for parents, requests for flexible working, and selection for employment, promotion, training, or other developmental opportunities.
- We are committed to the principle of diversity and inclusion for all colleagues and customers, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or disability.

- This policy and the associated procedures (if applicable) will ensure that customers and colleagues are treated as individuals with fairness and respect. An Equality Assessment has been completed on this policy.

Scope, Escalation and Monitoring

Scope

- The scope of this policy covers Gentoo Group, Gentoo Homes and Gentoo Developments.
- This policy applies to:
 - General Needs rented properties
 - Supported Housing
 - Sheltered Housing
 - Leasehold/Shared ownership
 - Rent to Buy properties
 - Market rented properties (domestic)
 - Temporary Accommodation
 - Stock owned but not managed by the Group
 - Communal Areas, including those relating to Leasehold/Shared Ownership properties
 - Stock managed by Gentoo on behalf of a third party
 - Garages and outbuildings

Escalation

- Where the Board or a Committee has concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they must escalate these concerns to the Group Chief Executive Officer.
- Where a colleague has concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they must escalate these concerns through their line management structure, and ultimately to the Executive Team.
- Where a colleague continues to have concerns about significant issues in any area of this policy, they should refer to the whistleblowing section within the Group's Working Professionally Policy, which can be found on the Policy Hub on the Gentoo Intranet.

Monitoring

- This policy will be reviewed annually, unless business needs or legislative changes dictate that we review it before this time.
- Overall responsibility for this Policy lies with the Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance, accountability lies with the Group Chief Executive Officer.
- This policy may be subject to an audit in line with the internal audit plan.
- This policy is a grade 1 and changes will need the approval of the Risk and Audit Committee.

Core Purpose, Vision and Themes

- Our core purpose is to provide warm, safe and decent home for our customers of today and tomorrow.
- Our vision is to become the best provider of social homes in the country.
- Our values are what we stand for and what we want to be known for. They are what makes us, us.
 - We care about people.
 - We take accountability.
 - We shape the future.
 - We bring leadership.
 - We deliver.
- We live our values in everything we do from the boardroom to the front room, to deliver our priorities for our customers.
- We have identified six themes which will guide the delivery of our services and support the Group's vision and ambitions for the next 10 years.
 - The best provider of social homes in the country.
 - A housing provider that listens and sorts things out.
 - Helping our communities to thrive.
 - Achieving growth through partnerships and innovation.
 - A professional, caring, great place to work.
 - Embracing modern technology and data.

Regulation and Legislation

- The Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance will ensure this policy has regard to all legislation, regulation and best practice. The regulations and legislations applicable to this policy are:
 - Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025
 - Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
 - Housing Act 2004
 - and any other applicable legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The key roles and responsibilities in Gentoo for this policy are set out below. If applicable, additional responsibilities for this policy are detailed in the relevant supporting procedures.

Role	Key responsibilities
Group Board	• The Group Board has responsibility and accountability for customer safety, including how the Group manages the risk of damp and mould in its properties. In practice their responsibility is to challenge the Group Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team to ensure that there is proportionate governance, control and risk management in place for the Group to ensure the safety of customers and manage the risk of damp and mould.
Risk and Audit Committee	• The Group's Risk and Audit Committee has responsibility and accountability for monitoring how the Group is managing the risk of damp and mould in its properties. They must ensure there is sufficient scrutiny and challenge and that they express any significant concerns to the Group Board and the Executive Team.
Group Chief Executive Officer	• The Group Chief Executive Officer has ultimate responsibility and accountability for customer safety, including how the Group manages the risk of damp and mould in its properties.

Role	Key responsibilities
Executive Director of Regulatory and Business Services	• The Executive Director of Regulatory and Business services has responsibility and accountability for ensuring that a suitable damp and mould policy is prepared and regularly reviewed, and that there are adequate arrangements to seek assurance that the Group is meeting its legal and policy requirements.
Executive Director of Property	• The Executive Director of Property has responsibility and accountability for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are implemented and that suitable and sufficient written procedures and processes are prepared to manage the risk of damp and mould in the Group's properties.
Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance	• The Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance has responsibility to prepare and keep up to date the Group's policy on damp and mould, and to seek assurance that the Group is meeting its legal and policy requirements. • The Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance is appointed as the Group's Health and Safety Lead in accordance with the requirements of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 and has responsibility to carry out the functions of this role.
Responsible business area directors	• Each responsible business area director has responsibility and accountability to ensure suitable arrangements are developed and implemented to manage activities undertaken by their business area in relation to damp and mould.

Role	Key responsibilities
Property Case Management Team	• The Property Case Management Team has responsibility for co-ordinating cases of damp or mould that are categorised as emergency or significant hazards. This includes ensuring all business areas involved in each case co-operate and communicate; and escalating any issues to the relevant business area director when required.

Associated Procedures and Processes

- The Executive Director of Property shall ensure that suitable written procedures and processes are developed to meet the requirements of this policy. The Executive Team shall ensure that business areas work collaboratively to develop suitable written procedures and processes to enable the Group to adopt a collaborative approach to managing damp or mould and reduce the likelihood of activities occurring in isolation.
- Each written procedure and process shall:
 - detail, at an operational level, how the Group or a specific business area of the Group manages a specific activity in relation to damp or mould
 - detail the specific roles and responsibilities of those involved in managing the specific activity which the procedure or process relates to
 - be approved by the responsible business area director or assistant director before being implemented
 - be reviewed at least every two years by the responsible business area director, or sooner if there is reason to believe it is no longer effective
 - be made available to all colleagues in the Group via an approved document storage and sharing portal.

Policy Detail

Categorising the prevalence of damp or mould

- The Group shall categorise all instances of damp or mould in its properties.

- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall develop and implement a suitable method for categorising the prevalence of damp or mould in the Group's properties. This method shall take account of the approach detailed in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005 (HHSRS) and the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025 to ensure the prevalence of damp and mould in a property is appropriately categorised. This shall include consideration of:
 - whether damp and mould presents an emergency or significant hazard as defined in the Group's Emergency and Significant Hazards in Social Homes Policy
 - the likelihood over the coming twelve months of a customer suffering any harm because of the prevalence of damp or mould
 - the class of harm, as defined in the HHSRS, likely to be suffered by a customer over the coming twelve months because of the prevalence of damp or mould
 - the spread of possible harm resulting from the prevalence of damp or mould in relation to each class of harm
 - whether the prevalence of damp or mould would be likely to be classified as a Category 1 or Category 2 hazard under the HHSRS
 - any customers who are more vulnerable to the prevalence of damp or mould and therefore may be at greater risk.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that the Group's approach to categorising damp or mould is documented in a suitable procedure to support this policy, and any associated procedures such as those relating to stock condition surveys.
- The Group shall ensure that any colleague or third-party whose role requires them to categorise damp or mould in a property is competent to do so. This shall include specific competence and knowledge of how to categorise instances of damp or mould taking account of the Group's categories and the scoring method detailed in the HHSRS.

Proactive identification of damp or mould

- The Group shall adopt a proactive approach to identifying the prevalence of damp or mould across its housing stock. This shall be achieved through the Group's rolling programme of stock condition surveys and by analysing data on damp or mould to develop a risk profile of the Group's stock that enables the Group to adopt a preventive approach wherever possible.

Stock condition surveys

- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that the prevalence of damp or mould is considered as part of the Group's approach to stock condition surveys.
- Each stock condition survey shall include a visual inspection of the property to identify any visible signs of damp or mould, and shall consider a range of factors that could contribute to the prevalence of damp or mould.
- When a stock condition surveyor identifies signs of damp or mould then they shall:
 - make an initial assessment of the prevalence of damp or mould throughout the property
 - record suitable and sufficient information in the stock condition survey to describe the prevalence of damp or mould throughout the property, including all location(s) in the property where there is visible evidence of damp or mould
 - initially categorise the prevalence of damp or mould in accordance with the criteria detailed in the relevant procedure.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that each stock condition survey that identifies the most serious instances of damp or mould in accordance with the categorisation criteria detailed in the relevant procedure is peer reviewed by a suitably qualified Surveyor to provide assurance on the accuracy of the categorisation.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall develop and implement suitable procedures to ensure that instances of damp or mould categorised as an emergency or significant hazard, identified during a stock condition survey are referred to the Property Case Management Team. Any other damp and mould identified shall be reported via the routine repairs process.

Empty homes

- The Group shall take proactive steps to respond to damp or mould issues in empty homes before an empty home is re-let. The Group shall not prioritise re-let targets above establishing the root cause of the prevalence of damp or mould and taking the necessary steps to rectify this.
- The Director of Property Maintenance shall develop and implement suitable arrangements to identify the prevalence of damp or mould in empty homes. This includes ensuring that:
 - the Group's empty homes standard includes:

- a requirement for a property to be free of visible signs of damp or mould before it is re-let
- a requirement to ensure all physical or mechanical ventilation intended to reduce the likelihood of damp or mould, such as doors, windows, vents and extractor fans, is in good working order before the property is re-let.
- any visible signs of damp or mould in an empty home are assessed by an Empty Homes Surveyor and are referred to a competent surveyor for further investigation and categorisation when required
- the root cause of any damp or mould in an empty home is identified and suitable actions are taken to rectify those causes and reduce the likelihood of problems recurring once the property is let
- the property is referred to the Property Case Management Team to initiate the after-care process where damp and mould categorised as an emergency or significant hazard has been treated
- suitable records are retained in an approved corporate system to provide evidence of the actions taken to rectify the causes of damp or mould in an empty home.

All visits to customer's properties

- The Group recognises that colleagues from across the organisation visit customers' properties for different reasons. The Group is committed to ensuring all colleagues who visit customer's properties take an inquisitive approach to identify damp or mould in property types where it is more likely to occur. This includes ensuring all colleagues who visit customer's properties are aware of how to identify the signs of damp or mould and the action they should take to report such issues via the appropriate internal channels.

Analysis of data

- The Group recognises the importance of good quality and robust data to enable it to understand the risk profile of its properties in relation to damp and mould and to adopt a proactive approach to managing risks.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that the Group incorporates a data-led, proactive approach to damp and mould in its asset management strategy and investment plans. This shall include reviewing and analysing all data held by the Group on damp and mould to identify trends and factors such as property type,

property location, property age and tenancy types that are more vulnerable to the prevalence of damp or mould.

- This approach shall consider data from all sources, including:
 - the findings of stock condition surveys.
 - reports from customers about the prevalence of damp or mould in their properties
 - the findings of investigations to determine the root causes of damp in properties
 - the results of customer engagement activities, including customer satisfaction measures
 - the number and type of complaints from customers in relation to damp or mould.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that all data held by the Group on damp or mould, and the findings from analysing that data, is taken into consideration when developing the Group's planned investment work to:
 - ensure planned investment work seeks to rectify known property-related root causes, such as certain construction types or structural features
 - proactively install appropriate physical and/or mechanical measures in properties that are designed to reduce the likelihood of damp or mould occurring.

Responding to reports of damp or mould

- The Group accepts responsibility for investigating and resolving all instances of damp or mould in its properties. The Group shall treat each customer who reports the prevalence of damp or mould in their property with respect and empathy and shall not apportion blame on any customer.
- The Group shall respond to all reports of damp or mould in a timely manner and aims to rectify all issues as soon as is reasonably practicable once the root cause and the necessary remedial actions have been identified.
- The Group shall adopt a proportionate and risk-based approach to the management of damp and mould cases. The level of oversight and case management applied shall be determined by the severity of the damp or mould, the vulnerability of customers, applicable legal requirements and any other factors that increase risk
- The Group shall respond to reports of damp and mould which are categorised as an emergency or significant hazard in accordance with the timescales specified in the Emergency and Significant Hazards in Social Homes Policy.

Case management

The Group shall establish:

- A Property Case Management Team which has responsibility for co-ordinating damp and mould cases that meet the Group's criteria for case management and ensuring appropriate escalation and oversight of higher-risk cases. The Team shall also support arrangements for monitoring recurrence and escalating cases where risk increases.
- Reports of damp or mould that do not meet the criteria for case management shall be managed through the Group's standard damp and mould repairs process. These cases shall be subject to triage, inspection, investigation and remedial action in accordance with the requirements of this policy and the relevant procedures. Where circumstances change or increased risk is identified, the case shall be escalated into formal case management arrangements.
- The Property Case Management Team shall have responsibility for the monitoring and oversight of reports of damp and mould that have been categorised as an emergency or significant hazard and will assign a Case Co-ordinator to ensure each case is satisfactorily resolved in a timely manner. This includes:
 - reports made by customers
 - reports following a stock condition survey
 - reports made by any other Group colleague who visits a customer's property and identifies damp or mould which is categorized as an emergency or significant hazard
 - reports following a failed right to buy or right to acquire transaction where a survey identified the prevalence of damp or mould which is categorised as an emergency or significant hazard
 - proactive engagement with customers following completed works to rectify damp and mould which was categorised as an emergency or significant hazard as part of the Group's aftercare service.
- The Property Case Management Team shall ensure the effective co-operation and co-ordination between each business area that need to be involved in investigating emergency and significant damp or mould hazards in a property and taking action to rectify issues identified during those investigations.
- The Assistant Director of Maintenance Operations shall ensure that a Case Co-ordinator is assigned to co-ordinate reports of damp or mould in a property as needed.
- The Case Management Team shall take responsibility for oversight of each damp and mould case categorised as an emergency or significant hazard, ensuring each case is handled in accordance with the policy, monitoring progress of a case and

intervening in the process when necessary to deliver an effective resolution of each case that is assigned to them. This shall include ensuring that the following actions are completed:

- recording in an approved corporate system suitable and sufficient details of each case they are handling, to provide an audit trail of the steps taken by the Group to respond to the case and rectify any issues
- contacting the lead customer in a property, within an agreed timescale to confirm the name of their Case Co-ordinator and the role and responsibilities of the Property Case Management Team
- that a surveyor is planned to visit the property on the date and time agreed with the customer
- any no access issues are addressed as needed under the defined Group procedure
- that the Surveyor visiting the property undertakes an investigation to identify, wherever possible, the root cause of the prevalence of damp or mould and the remedial actions required to rectify the issues they have identified
- recording in an approved corporate system the category of damp or mould in the property, based on the information provided to them by the surveyor undertaking the investigation
- that the surveyor instructs an appropriate person to undertake any further surveys that may be required based on the findings of their initial investigation
- that a surveyor instructs an appropriate, independent person to undertake any further surveys that may be required based on the findings of the Group's investigations, for example when the root cause has not been identified
- that all remedial actions recommended by the surveyor and/or other person investigating the prevalence of damp or mould are recorded in an approved corporate system and assigned to the relevant business area or third-party contractor
- co-ordination takes place with relevant colleagues in instances when the extent of the damp or mould and the remedial work required to rectify this could result in the Group needing to temporarily re-house the customer
- that the status of all remedial actions are monitored through to completion
- suitable evidence, such as photographs and reports, are recorded in an approved corporate system to demonstrate that remedial actions have been satisfactorily completed

- that any issues with the case is escalated as appropriate, such as unexplained delays or a lack of action from those involved in dealing with the case through the defined escalation process
- that contact is maintained with the customer, as needed, throughout the case to ensure they are kept up-to-date with how the case is progressing, and written summaries are provided to customers in accordance with the Emergency and Significant Hazards in Social Homes Policy.
- that the Housing Team determines whether the customer would benefit from being referred to specialist support services, such as the Group's Money Matters Team
- that contact with the customer is completed at agreed intervals in line with the Group's after-care arrangements.

Investigating the prevalence of damp or mould

- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that a competent surveyor visits a property to investigate the prevalence of damp or mould when requested to do so by the Property Case Management Team.
- Any Surveyor visiting a property to investigate the prevalence of damp or mould shall:
 - categorise the prevalence of damp or mould in accordance with the Group's categorisation criteria (this shall include validating or amending any initial categorisation made when the referral has arisen from a stock condition survey)
 - immediately inform the Case Co-ordinator of any situation that they think poses an immediate risk to the health and safety of customers to enable the Group to respond promptly and appropriately
 - ensure sufficient information is obtained from the customer about any obvious defects, such as water ingress, damage to the roof, internal leaks or blocked drainage that could be contributing to the prevalence of damp or mould
 - communicate effectively and promptly with the Case Co-ordinator and any other person(s) involved in investigating the prevalence of damp or mould in a property.
 - written reports for damp and mould categorised as an emergency or significant hazard must be provided to customers in accordance with the timescales specified in the Emergency and Significant Hazards in Social Homes Policy

- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that any third-party surveyor who investigates the prevalence of damp or mould in a property on behalf of the Group undertakes their work in accordance with the requirements of this policy and any relevant associated procedures.

Managing remedial actions

- The Group shall ensure that it undertakes the necessary remedial actions to rectify the issues with damp or mould in a property. This shall include:
 - identifying and completing any immediate actions to reduce the immediate risk, such as washing and cleaning using suitable products to remove the visible signs of damp or mould
 - identifying and completing the necessary remedial actions to address the root cause of damp or mould and to reduce the likelihood of the issue reoccurring in future
 - identifying instances when a customer may need to be temporarily re-housed and facilitating this in conjunction with the customer.
- The Group shall ensure that:
 - all remedial actions take account of any vulnerabilities that the customer may have, and any measures that the Group may need to take in relation to this when planning and undertaking the necessary work
 - all remedial actions arising from damp and mould that are categorised as an emergency or significant hazard or completed in accordance with the prescribed timescales established in the Emergency and Significant Hazards in Social Homes Policy
 - all remedial actions are recorded in an approved corporate system to enable progress against actions to be monitored and reported on
 - all remedial actions are assigned to a competent person who will be able to satisfactorily complete the required work
 - a suitable target date is assigned to each remedial action and that those target dates are recorded in an approved corporate system, are proportionate to the risk, and take account of the nature and duration of work required to complete the action
 - there are processes to prevent remedial actions from being marked as complete in error
 - remedial actions are only marked as complete once the customer has confirmed they are satisfied that all work has been carried out

- the Case Co-ordinator ensures that a suitable representative from Housing and Property, inspects each property from which a customer has been temporarily re-housed whilst work was carried out prior to the customer moving back into the property to ensure it is in a suitable condition
- only the relevant Repairs Manager can mark actions as complete, and the Case Co-ordinator can close the case where one has been made, (subject to the appropriate aftercare arrangements) when they are satisfied that all work has been carried out and that suitable evidence has been provided to support this.

Access

- The Group shall develop and implement suitable arrangements to ensure it is able to access a domestic property to investigate reports of damp or mould and to complete remedial actions to rectify those issues. Those arrangements shall detail how the Group will take all reasonable steps to gain access when dealing with instances when a customer refuses to permit access to the property.

After-care

- The Group shall provide an after-care service for damp and mould cases that are subject to formal case management. The purpose of after-care is to establish whether damp or mould has reoccurred and whether any further action is required following completion of remedial works
- The Group shall maintain arrangements to monitor recurrence in cases that are not subject to formal case management. This shall include suitable mechanisms to identify repeat reports of damp or mould and trigger further investigation or escalation where appropriate.
- The Assistant Director of Maintenance Operations shall develop and implement suitable arrangements to enable the Property Case Management Team to provide an effective after-care service to customers in the 12 months after the completion of all remedial actions associated with emergency and significant damp and mould hazards. This shall include arrangements for each Case Co-ordinator to:
 - continue to be the primary point of contact, as needed, for the customer in relation to their damp or mould case for the duration of the after-care period
 - ensure customers are contacted via telephone at agreed intervals throughout the after-care period to establish whether the prevalence of damp or mould has reoccurred
 - ensure that the customer is contacted between months 10 and 12 of the after-care period to establish whether the prevalence of damp or mould has reoccurred

- ensure customers are contacted to arrange any planned quality assurance and quality control activities
- arrange the necessary inspections to undertake further investigations when the prevalence of damp or mould has reoccurred
- record all contact with customers during the after-care period in an approved corporate system

Quality assurance and quality control

- The Director of Property Maintenance and the Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that a suitable programme of quality assurance and quality control is developed and implemented in relation to remedial work carried out on behalf of their business areas to rectify issues with damp or mould.
- This shall form part of the Group's after-care arrangements and shall include monitoring the quality of work carried out and monitoring the effectiveness of remedial work in preventing the reoccurrence of damp or mould in a property.
- The Director of Property Maintenance and the Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that the Case Co-ordinator is made aware of all planned quality assurance and quality control activities and that the Case Co-ordinator liaises with the customer to arrange those activities.

Information and advice for customers

- The Group recognises that providing advice and information to customers is one element of a holistic approach the Group must take to manage damp and mould. The Group is committed to providing information to customers in a helpful and supportive way that does not apportion blame onto customers.
- The Head of Customer Voice and Engagement shall ensure that the Group uses its customer engagement mechanisms to involve customers in the design and co-production of information resources to ensure they are accessible, relevant and easy to understand.
- The Group shall use a range of tools and resources to make information and advice available and accessible to all customers.
- The Group shall develop and implement suitable arrangements to ensure customers are proactively provided with practical, helpful advice. This shall include:
 - information and advice at the point of tenancy sign-up on how to best manage the environment within their home to help prevent damp or mould occurring

- information and advice at the point of tenancy sign-up on any remedial work carried out to rectify damp or mould whilst the property was void, including details of the Group's after-care service
- information on how the Group responds to reports of damp or mould, including details of how to report concerns directly to the Group
- information on how to operate any mechanical measures in their property that are designed to reduce the likelihood of damp or mould occurring
- information on how to report faults with any mechanical measures in their property that are designed to reduce the likelihood of damp or mould occurring
- information on the Group's complaints policy and what the customer needs to do if they wish to make a complaint.

Information, instruction and training for colleagues

- The Group recognises the importance of a competent and professional approach when dealing with the prevalence of damp or mould in its properties.
- The Group will provide suitable information, instruction and training to colleagues who are involved in managing damp or mould in the Group's properties. This training will ensure colleagues understand the Group's approach to managing damp and mould, and their duties and responsibilities.
- The information, instruction and training provided to colleagues shall be relevant and proportionate to their role, and shall include:
 - any specific technical training and qualifications required for specific roles, for example to enable colleagues to identify the prevalence of damp or mould and to accurately categorise instances of damp or mould in accordance with the Group's procedures and the principles of the HHSRS
 - general awareness training for the Property Case Management Team to enable them to understand the risks associated with damp and mould
 - general awareness training for all colleagues who visit customer's properties in their role, for example to enable them to identify visible signs of damp or mould and know how to report such situations internally via the appropriate channels
 - general awareness training for all colleagues who visit customer's properties in their role to ensure they understand the behaviours and professionalism expected by the Group when seeking to help customers resolve damp or mould in their home and other problems they may be experiencing.

- The Director of People, in conjunction with relevant business area directors, shall identify those roles in the Group who require information, instruction and training on the Group's approach to managing damp and mould. This shall include recording the training requirements for each role and how often training needs to be refreshed.

Information, instruction and training for contractors

- The Group may use third-party contractors to undertake specific activities to enable the Group to manage damp and mould across its properties. This may include the completion of stock condition surveys, specialist surveys and investigations and remedial work.
- The Group expects that all contractors undertaking work in relation to damp or mould on behalf of the Group to act in accordance with the requirements of this policy and any associated procedures.
- Each business area director whose business area appoints third-party contractors to undertake work in relation to damp or mould on behalf of the Group must ensure that each contractor:
 - is competent and has the necessary training and qualifications for the work they have been appointed to carry out
 - is provided with the necessary information on the Group's damp and mould policy and associated procedures, and how they are expected to act in accordance with that policy and procedures.
- Each business area director who appoints third party contractors to undertake any work in customer's properties on behalf of the Group must ensure that each contractor is provided with suitable general awareness training, for example to enable them to identify visible signs of damp or mould and know how to refer such situations to the Group.

Considering damp or mould during planned investment and the construction of new homes

- The Group recognises that the prevalence of damp or mould in its properties could be adversely affected by certain types of planned investment and construction work.
- The Director of Asset and Sustainability shall ensure that all planned investment work undertaken by the Group, in particular those associated with energy efficiency objectives, do not unintentionally contribute to the prevalence of damp or mould once that work has been completed.

- The Homes and Development Director shall ensure that the Group's affordable housing types are designed and constructed in such a way that does not unintentionally contribute to the prevalence of damp or mould once a home has been constructed and is occupied.

Complaints

- The Head of Customer Voice and Engagement shall ensure that any complaints against the Group in relation to damp or mould are handled in accordance with the Group's complaints policy and procedures. This shall include ensuring the policy is in line with the Complaint Handling Code and establishes clear compensation and redress guidance, including recognising that each case shall be considered on its own merits
- The Head of Customer Voice and Engagement shall ensure that the Group promotes the benefits of resolving disputes via the Group's complaints policy and the customer's rights to approach the Housing Ombudsman at an early stage as an appropriate and effective route to resolving disputes.
- The Group shall seek to resolve all disputes through its complaints policy to avoid the need for further steps such as Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Condition Claims and possible legal proceedings. This includes continuing to try to resolve disputes using the Group's complaints policy when a Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Condition Claim has been initiated.

Board and Committee Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- The Director of Property Maintenance shall ensure that the following key performance indicator is reported to the Group Board and Risk and Audit Committee in accordance with their agreed schedules of business:
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 - the number of new cases of damp and mould opened within the period, categorised by emergency, significant or other
 - the total number of cases of damp and mould by year they were first raised
 - the total number of times each open case has recurred
- Narrative shall be provided to detail any overdue emergency and significant damp and mould hazards, associated risks, why they are open, the mitigation measures in place and the date by which remedial works are to be completed.

Audit and Assurance

- The Director of Safety, Risk and Assurance shall ensure that the Group seeks assurance on how it is managing damp and mould across its housing stock in accordance with legal requirements and the requirements of this policy. This shall include ensuring that:
 - the Risk and Assurance Team undertakes periodic audits of the Group's arrangements for managing damp and mould, in accordance with the technical assurance audit programme
 - the Group's internal audit function undertakes periodic internal audits of the Group's arrangements for managing damp and mould, in accordance with the internal audit programme
 - the findings of each audit are shared with relevant stakeholders in the Group, including the Senior Leadership Team, Executive Team, Risk and Audit Committee and Group Board.

Records

- The Group shall develop and implement suitable arrangements to ensure all relevant records relating to damp and mould are retained in an approved corporate system. This shall include records of:
 - stock condition surveys
 - investigations into instances of damp or mould
 - remedial actions taken to rectify instances of damp or mould, including evidence to demonstrate the completion of remedial actions
 - all quality assurance and quality control activities undertaken following the completion of remedial actions
 - all correspondence and communication with customers relating to cases of damp or mould
 - all complaints in relation to instances of damp or mould
 - all work carried out by third-party contractors on behalf of the Group in relation to damp and mould
 - all mechanical equipment installed in a property to prevent the likelihood of damp or mould occurring.

Version Control

Version history			
Version	Amendment details	Date	Revised by
0.1	Policy Draft	12/05/2023	Stephen Flounders
1.0	Policy Approved by Group Board	25/05/2023	Chloe Appleby
1.1	Updated to reflect new role of Plan & Bus. Services Operations Manager and to emphasise that the role of Case Co-ordinator is of oversight with actions being delivered by a number of roles within the Planning and Business Services team.	12/09/2023	Peter Akers
1.2	Updated to reflect requirements for performance reporting to Group Board and Risk and Audit Committee.	3/10/2023	Stephen Flounders
1.3	Director of Risk and Assurance updated with Executive Director of Regulatory and Business Services and amendments made to reflect minor contradictions between the procedure documents and the policy.	4/10/2023	Peter Akers
1.3	Director of Risk and Assurance updated with Executive Director of Regulatory and Business Services and amendments made to reflect minor contradictions between the procedure documents and the policy.	4/10/2023	Caroline Breheny
1.4	Formatting changes	11/10/2023	Caroline Breheny
1.5	Updated values	31/05/2024	Gemma Darville

1.6	Annual review and interim approval by Executive Director of Regulatory and Business Services. Job title changes	01.09.24	Gemma Darville
2.0	Annual approval by Risk and Audit Committee	12.09.2025	Gemma Darville
3.0	Annual review, changes to core purpose, vision and themes, inclusion of changes to meet the requirements of the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, updates to RAC reporting, minor changes to job titles and approved by Risk and Audit Committee	12/05/2023	Gemma Darville
3.1	Updated Format	10.03.26	Chloe Appleby
4.0	Annual approval by Risk and Audit Committee – no changes.	06.05.2026	Gemma Darville
4.1	Updated to reflect changes to case management and aftercare and approval by RAC.	25.08.2026	Gemma Darville
5.0	Approved by RAC.	10.09.2026	Chloe Appleby