

## Damp, Mould & Condensation Management Policy

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Owner: Asset and Repairs	Next Scheduled Review: 24/03/2029

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy outlines how Flint Housing will comply with the Regulatory framework for Social Housing in England as outlined below:
- (Registered Providers must) meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.*
- 1.2 Flint Housing is committed to providing high quality, safe, affordable homes and an environment where our residents can thrive. This policy has been specifically developed to ensure that we meet this promise by adopting a zero tolerance to damp and mould within our homes, including those managed by our housing management providers.
- 1.3 Flint Housing believes it is important to have a specific policy to address damp and mould. The policy includes proactive interventions, our approach to diagnosis, actions considered appropriate in different circumstances, effective communication, and aftercare.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all properties owned by Flint Housing and all its associated entities, including those managed by external housing management providers. In some cases, Flint Housing will not hold the landlord's duty of care for communal systems; this must be clearly established before we exclude these properties. Flint Housing does not hold a duty of care in respect of damp, mould and condensation in leaseholders' or shared owners' homes.
- 1.5 Flint Housing is currently focused on developing new build homes for residents. As a consequence, Flint Housing homes will typically be recently built and to more stringent building regulations and standards than properties within the broader social housing sector. They will likely still be subject to NHBC or equivalent warranties. Notwithstanding this, although Flint Housing properties should have a commensurately lower risk of damp, mould and condensation than the broader sector, such risk nevertheless exists and must be taken seriously. The risk of damp, mould and condensation will also be present in properties that may have been built by others, which are subsequently acquired by Flint Housing.

### 2. Why manage damp, mould and condensation?

- 2.1 The presence of, and subsequent mismanagement of, damp, mould and condensation issues cause severe negative impacts on residents..
- 2.2 Recent changes to legislation, in particular the introduction of The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 and The introduction of Awaab's Law via The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, have rightly sought to improve standards within the social housing sector, instil a focus on resident voice and influence and to drive greater accountability to residents across the sector.
- 2.3 Following an increase in disrepair claims and a number of high-profile cases the Housing Ombudsman commissioned a report into Housing Associations handling of damp and mould cases in October 2021. The initial report, 'Spotlight on damp and mould – It's not lifestyle', examined 410 complaints, investigated about 142 landlords over a two-year period, with maladministration found in 56%, rising to 64% for complaint handling alone. This failure rate was often the result of inaction, excessive delays or poor communication.
- 2.4 The report concluded that social landlords should adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould and that addressing damp and mould needed to be a higher priority for landlords, with a change in culture from reactive to proactive in order to improve the experience of residents.

2.5 We have since seen the implementation of Awaab’s Law, the primary Legislation- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 now inserts (implies) into all social tenancies a term requiring social landlords to comply with specific timescales in relation to “damp and mould” and other emergency hazards, these are set out in The Regulations [ The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025] which came into effect on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

2.6 We are legally obliged to comply with the requirements as set out in Legislation and particularly Awaab’s Law.

### 3. Who is at risk?

3.1 Damp, mould and condensation is harmful to residents and others that come into prolonged contact with the affected areas. The presence of damp and mould creates significant distress and inconvenience to residents and can lead to significant concerns about health and well-being if left untreated.

### 4. Monitoring & quality control

4.1 We will monitor implementation of this policy using the following performance measures:

Measure	Target	Reviewed by / interval
No. of reported cases of damp, mould or condensation (by resident, housing management provider or other person) – no target set to encourage reporting of issues	na	<u>Monthly</u> • Asset and Repairs Team
No. of reported cases of damp, mould or condensation issues rectified in line with our repairs policy	100%	<u>Quarterly</u> • Board of Directors
No. of reported cases of damp, mould or condensation issues outstanding and status of communications / responses / plan to fix	0%	

4.2 Flint Housing’s housing management providers will be required to maintain the above KPI targets as part of the housing management services provided.

### 5. Policy implementation & responsibilities

5.1 Flint Housing’s Asset and Repairs Team retains overall accountability for the policy. Flint Housing is the duty-holder.

5.2 The Asset and Repairs Team is responsible for:

- Policy implementation and ensuring adequate resources are made available to meet the policy objectives;
- The delivery of the key policy objectives and for achieving the associated targets
- Overseeing the implementation of this policy, including through housing management agreements entered into by Flint Housing;
- monitoring performance of housing management providers against this policy
- ensuring the policy is reviewed and updated in line with legislation

- 5.3 The Asset and Repairs Team will also be responsible for leading the due diligence process for potential future acquisitions of housing to assess risk of damp, mould and condensation, with a view to identifying a clear action plan to address such issues post-acquisition and during the build.
- 5.4 Flint Housing's housing management provider(s) will be responsible for the implementation of the policy within housing management services provided to Flint Housing as well as routine monitoring of the performance of maintenance and repairs to ensure observance with this policy for Flint Housing's properties once acquired and under management. The relevant housing management provider will also oversee the management of contractors carrying out any required repair works.
- 5.5 Flint Housing's housing management provider(s) will be required to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that a Damp, Mould & Condensation Register is maintained. This will include, ensuring that those carrying out an investigation, following becoming aware of a damp and mould issue (that is presenting a significant risk of harm to the resident) is appropriately trained / is a "competent investigator" as required under the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements)(England) Regulations 2025.
- 5.6 The third-party housing management provider will be responsible for conducting periodic visual inspections and proactive resident engagement on the condition of damp, mould and condensation found within a property, to ensure identified issues are rectified and are not reoccurring. The frequency of these visits will be determined on a case-by-case basis and it is anticipated that the lead officer attending will be suitably trained to establish the presence of a hazard.

## **6. Objectives**

- 6.1 Flint Housing has a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould. We take a proactive approach across all areas of our business to ensure issues of this nature are not seen as acceptable and we ensure that support is offered by us, through our housing management provider(s) and directly, to our customers to ensure that any issues are resolved swiftly and satisfactorily.
  - 6.2 We will ensure that we treat residents reporting damp and mould with respect and empathy and will recognise that having mould issues in a home can be distressing for our customers. We will ensure we are supportive in our approach, ensuring clear, honest, positive communication throughout focused on understanding the issues and addressing them appropriately as quickly as possible.
  - 6.3 We will ensure that our and our housing management providers' staff receive training to properly diagnose and respond to reports of damp and mould in accordance with the requirements of Awaab's Law, in addition to understanding the causes and remedies of the causes and to understand the effects that damp and mould can have on the health of our residents.
  - 6.4 Together with residents, we will review the information, materials and support provided to residents to ensure that these strike the right tone and are effective in helping residents to avoid damp and mould in their properties.
  - 6.5 We will ensure accurate records are kept when reports of damp and mould are made. Our housing management providers will be required to inform Flint Housing's Asset and Repairs Team without delay when a report of damp and mould is made and if that report of damp and mould is potentially presenting a significant risk of harm to the resident or occupants within the property. An assessment of risk will be made with details recorded and logged on our and our housing management provider's systems. Flint Housing will maintain a register of properties where damp and mould has been reported and will record and update the conditions around this through open communication between residents, our housing management providers and with direct oversight and engagement by Flint Housing, as required.
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- 6.6 The maintenance of a register will enable us to better understand the archetype of properties and components that are likely to suffer from damp and mould and to identify where issues may arise in similar properties and provide for a more effective tenancy support and aftercare.
- 6.7 We will ensure that our housing management provider's responses to reports of damp and mould are timely and reflect the urgency of the issue, in line with Awaab's Law and legislation. Inspections and responsive repairs to diagnose and alleviate damp (for example work to guttering and drains, replace tiles etc.) will be carried out as quickly and efficiently as possible in accordance with the Repairs Policy and/or Legislation. Where relevant, issues will be escalated and dealt with through the agreed defects protocol with the relevant housebuilder and/or utilising NHBC and equivalent warranties or insurances.
- 6.8 Where extensive works may be required, we will consider the individual circumstances of the household, including any vulnerabilities, and whether it is appropriate to move resident(s) out of their home at an early stage. Where necessary, we will promote the benefits of our complaints process and the Ombudsman to our residents as an appropriate and effective route to any resolution required.
- 6.9 We will continue to use the complaints procedure when any pre-action protocol has commenced and until legal proceedings have been issued to maximise the opportunities to resolve disputes outside of court.
- 6.10 We are committed to engaging with third party specialists/partners and will utilise their services as appropriate in order to provide an effective resolution to damp and mould issues, fuel poverty concerns and aftercare solutions that will be of benefit to our customers.
- 6.11 We will embrace new technology solutions regarding the diagnosis and management of damp, mould and condensation concerns. We will use data obtained in relation to damp and mould to inform how the business can take more proactive measures to prevent future issues i.e. gutter clearance programmes, energy efficiency upgrades and other improvement works.
- 6.12 We will ensure that surveys to establish the presence of any damp and mould are carried out by competent officers during any void period and when mutual exchanges are conducted.
- 6.13 All residents must receive the same high-quality standard of service across the full portfolio irrespective of the nature, location or designation of the property.

## **7. Damp, Mould and Condensation register**

7.1 Flint Housing will compile, maintain and utilise in internal decision making to prevent future issues, a database of properties where damp, mould and condensation have been recorded together with all pertinent information relating to the issues raised, property archetype and status of resolution – The Damp, Mould and Condensation Register. We will update the Register when:

- Issues are raised by residents
- Information is obtained during visits or building/ maintenance work

7.2 The register will be reviewed by Flint Housing's board every quarter.

## **8. Onsite risk assessments**

8.1 Our housing management providers will be encouraged to proactively raise any potential issues related to damp, mould and condensation when attending properties, irrespective of whether a resident has made a formal communication relating to the issue.

8.2 For the avoidance of doubt, In order to maintain compliance with Awaab's Law we will:

- Within 10 working days of becoming aware investigate any complaints of damp and mould that are potential significant hazards
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- We will provide the resident with a written summary of investigation finding within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.
- We will carry out relevant safety works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding, if the investigation identifies a significant hazard.
- We will carry out any supplementary preventative works to prevent a significant or emergency hazard recurring within 5 working days of the investigation concluding. If the work cannot be done, then steps will be taken to begin it. If steps cannot be taken to begin work in 5 working days this will be done as soon as possible, and work must be physically started within 12 weeks.
- If relevant safety work cannot be completed within the specified timeframes, then we will secure suitable alternative accommodation for the household at our expense.

## **9. Equality and diversity**

- 9.1 Flint Housing is committed to making sure all services are accessible to all our residents. Our staff will be trained to make sure they are communicating appropriately with our customers, and they have the relevant information.
- 9.2 This Policy will be applied in a way which makes sure we treat all customers with fairness and respect. We recognise our duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and any other protected characteristic defined within the Equality Act 2010.
- 9.3 On request we will provide translations of our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and formats including braille and large print, where a request in respect of each individual item is demonstrably reasonable (and not, for example, vexatious).

## **10. Review**

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed in conjunction with our housing management partners to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues at least every 3 years or more frequently where:
- Legislation/regulation or industry changes require otherwise, making sure that it continues to meet our aims and industry best practice; and
  - We identify any problems or failures in this procedure as a result of customer and stakeholder feedback, complaints, or findings from any independent organisations; and
  - We become aware of any other circumstances which may affect the content of this policy.
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