



# Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy

January 2023

## MANNINGHAM HOUSING ASSOCIATION

### 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

#### 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.

- **Water leaks** from defective supply and waste pipework (especially in bathrooms and kitchens) can affect both external and internal walls and ceilings. The affected area looks and feels damp to the touch and stays damp regardless of the prevailing weather conditions. It is the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires repair.
- **Rising damp** is caused by water rising from the ground into the home. Water gets through or around a defective damp proof course (DPC) or passes through the masonry that was built without a DPC. Rising damp will only affect basements and ground floor rooms it will be present all year round but can be more noticeable in winter. It is extremely uncommon but is generally the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires repair.
- **Penetrating damp** appears because of a defect in the structure of the home, such as damaged brickwork, missing roof tiles, loose flashing, or leaking rainwater goods. These defects allow water to pass from the outside to the floors, walls, or ceilings. Penetrating damp is far more noticeable following a period of rainfall and will normally appear as a well-defined 'damp-patch' which looks and feels damp to the touch. It is the result of a problem or fault with the home, which requires a repair.
- **Condensation** is the most prevalent type of dampness and is caused by moisture in the air (water vapour) inside the dwelling meeting a colder surface, such as a window or wall. The

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drop in temperature causes liquid water to form on the surface and then soak in. It is usually found in kitchens, bathrooms, the corners of rooms, on north facing walls and on or near windows – all places that either tend to have a lot of moisture in the air, or to be cold generally. It is also found in areas of low air circulation such as behind wardrobes and beds, especially when they are pushed up against external walls. All homes in England can be affected by condensation because the climate is often cool and wet. Normal household activities also constantly release moisture into the air. Good practice in the home minimises and alleviates condensation, and in many cases will prevent it causing dampness and persistent mould. However, on occasions the root cause can be a problem that requires a repair or an improvement to the home, such as increased ventilation and/or extraction.

### 3. Legislation and Regulation

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

- Housing Act 1985, 2004
- 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 person, normally, from our Property Services department. The reports will be treated as an urgent category under our Repairs Policy and responded to within 5 working days.
- A case file will be created for every property that has reported damp and mould and interventions will continue until the issues have been resolved.
- Reports of damp and mould will be treated as a health and safety issue and will be attended to, even for customers pursuing Right to Acquire or progressing a Mutual Exchange.
- Where necessary we will arrange for an independent specialist survey to be undertaken by an independent survey/expert.
- Once a full diagnosis of all damp, condensation and mould growth issues has been established a scope of works will be produced and works orders raised as necessary to remedy issues.

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- Findings from the inspections and surveys undertaken will be fully discussed with customers together with proposed actions. These actions may include providing information to tenants on how they can help reduce the level of condensation in their home.
- MHA staff will periodically revisit all properties where damp, condensation and mould growth have been identified. Timescales for re-visits will be subject to the initial findings.
- 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.

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

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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.

<b>Policy Name</b>	Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
<b>Ref No.</b>	EX13
<b>Date of Customer Panel Consultation</b>	14 February 2023
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Completed</b>	Yes
<b>Date Approved by Executive</b>	February 2023
<b>Next Review date</b>	February 2026
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Operations