

Policy Title	Damp and Mould Policy
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Department	Property Services

# **DAMP AND MOULD POLICY**

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## **1. Introduction**

The safety and wellbeing of our customers is our top priority.

We want to provide safe, dry and warm homes for our customers, and to ensure that the fabric of the building is protected from deterioration due to damp and mould.

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity of the definition of damp and mould and to set out our approach to tackling damp and mould with our homes and will be able to:

- Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way.
- Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.
- Focus on working in partnership with tenants ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is provided.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp including, managing, and controlling condensation.
- Ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.
- Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and condensation problems.
- Ensure that the fabric of our property is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.

## **3. SCOPE OF POLICY**

The scope of this policy covers how Nehemiah Housing, and our tenants can jointly control, manage and eradicate damp and this includes:

- All Nehemiah properties that are tenanted, including any offices.
- Identifying the types of damp: rising, penetrating and condensation damp, including internal leaks.
- Identifying obligations for dealing with damp and condensation.

- Educating tenants on the causes of damp and condensation.
- Offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout the process to all tenants living in Nehemiah properties.
- Identifies situations where Nehemiah have exhausted all avenues i.e., heating, ventilation all intact, but tenant still refuses to switch on heating, due to fuel poverty, we will refer them to the necessary support needed.

#### Approach

- Nehemiah Housing has become a proactive & remedial stance in diagnosis, remedial issue to damp and mould.
- Discussion of Damp and Mould is now a standard item on Nehemiah Tenant panel meetings.

## 4. TYPES OF DAMP COVERED BY THIS POLICY: DEFINITIONS

### 4.1 Rising Damp

The movement of moisture from the ground rising up through the structure of the building through capillary action.

### 4.2 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.

### 4.3 Condensation Damp

Condensation occurs when moisture held in warm air encounters 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 g. undersized boilers and radiators, draught stripping.
- Inadequate thermal insulation. i.e., 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.

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. LEGAL AND REGULATORY EXPECTATIONS**

### **5.1 Nehemiah comply with relevant legislation and regulation, including:**

Nehemiah Housing will deliver a service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure the health, safety and security of people and property are always maintained.

### **5.2 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) provides The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from 2012 including 'The Home Standard'.**

**5.3** The key areas of legislation in this policy are:

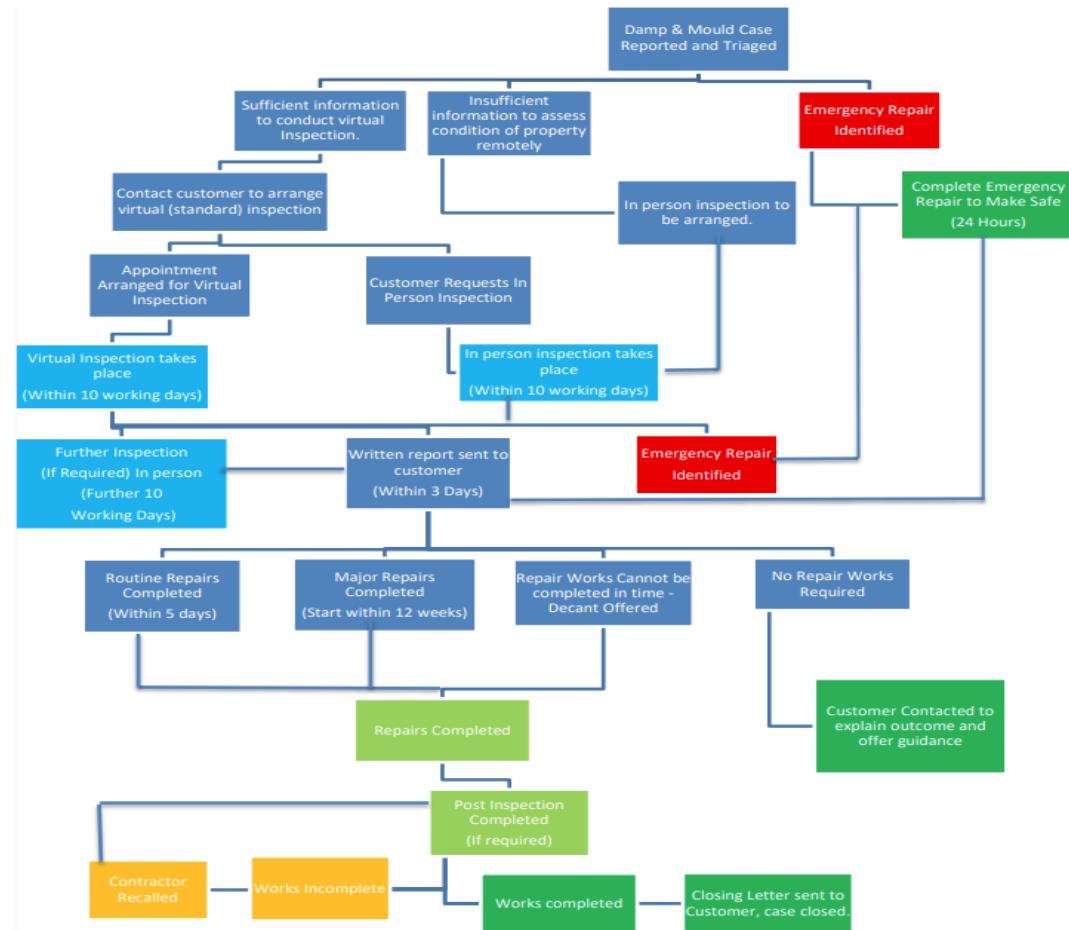
- Defective Premises Act 1972 (Section 4)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Building Regulations Act 1984
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing Act 2004
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025

**5.4 Related Policies and Procedures**

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Asset Management Strategy
- Voids & Allocations Policy
- Decanting Policy & Procedure
- Complaint Policy & Procedure
- No Access Procedure
- Responsive Repairs & Cyclical Maintenance Policy

## 6. Our approach to Damp and Mould

The diagram below illustrates the process and our approach with timescale in responding to reported Damp and Mould cases. Further details description is noted.



- 6.1. We operate a 2-stage approach to dealing with reports of damp and mould.
- 6.2. Upon the first report of a damp and mould situation (stage 1) we will arrange for a repairs contractor to visit and treat the mould with an anti-fungicidal wash down treatment. We aim to do the wash down in 5 days and repairs in 14 days.
- 6.3. The customer will also be asked to send photos of their concerns to us to ensure immediate escalation to stage 2 can happen if required.
- 6.4. If upon reviewing the photos, or during the stage 1 visit, it is identified that the mould growth is serious in nature, or it appears to be a category 1 or 2 hazard under HHSRS standards it will be escalated immediately to stage 2.
- 6.5. At stage 1, where there are no signs of any structural causes, and ventilation and heating are adequate, advice is given on how to prevent a recurrence of mould growth.

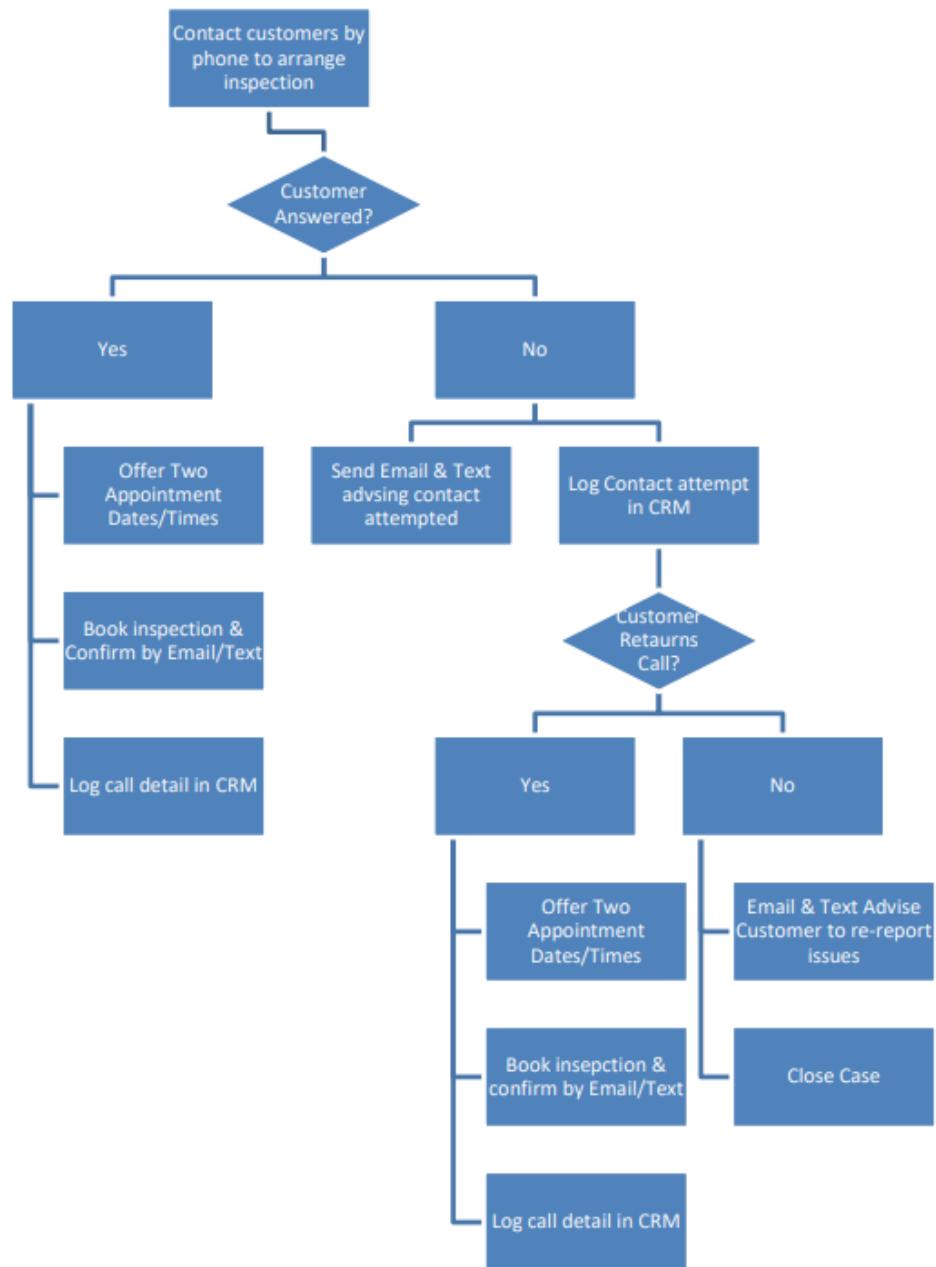
- 6.6. If a further report of damp and mould is received for the same area within an 12-month period, the case will be escalated to stage 2.
- 6.7. Any case at stage 2 will have a full damp and mould survey undertaken. This may include taking damp and humidity measurements. We will aim to complete this within 7 days from the date of initial stage 2 notification report.
- 6.8. Any works required to address the concerns raised (including structural, additional ventilation or heating) will be overseen by a Specialist Damp and Mould contractor. All work at stage 2 we will aim to complete within 90 days, where possible we will get this done sooner.
- 6.9. If at stage 2 there are no property specific issues identified, and we are unable to support the customer with any improvements to heating or ventilation, we will allocate the case to our Tenancy Services Officer.
- 6.10. Our Tenancy Services Officer will work with the customer to identify the root cause of the problems and work with them to eradicate the mould issue. This will include, where needed, any grant funded availability for the installation of sensors to measure temperature and humidity to identify when condensation is forming.
- 6.11. If at any stage of this process, we identify that fuel poverty is a factor then we will offer support through our Money Advice Team.
- 6.12. If it is unsafe for the occupants to remain in the property while the works are carried out, alternative accommodation arrangements will be made. This may be on a day-by-day basis, or a temporary decant to an alternative accommodation.
- 6.13. Our Damp and Mould procedure (Appendix A) sets out further detail on our approach to diagnosis and the actions we will take in each circumstance. This will be dependent on the nature and severity of the issue.

## 7. Additional Support & Safeguarding

- 7.1 Where Internal conditions within a home, for example overcrowding, hoarding, are having an effect on health and wellbeing of the occupants, Nehemiah Housing will provide advice and guidance to customers. This may include options to move to appropriate alternative accommodation or signposting to external support agencies.
- 7.2 Where the vulnerabilities of customers mean we are unable to complete treatment to damp and mould, we will engage with our Tenancy Services team, our safeguarding process and other relevant partner organisations to provide appropriate support to the customer and allow works to proceed.
- 7.3 Where we have received a claim for disrepair that relates to damp and mould, we will act to ensure the legal process does not delay us completing works. We will consider whether to serve a notice of intent to enter and

remedy on any cases involving a Category 1 or 2 hazards under HHSRS standard or where we believe there is a vulnerable person or where the hazard is prejudicial to health, safety and welfare of the Customer.

7.4 We will take all reasonable steps to contact tenants, however where it is proving a challenge to contact tenants to discuss damp and mould and arrange inspections the following process will be applied.



## **8.00 Customer Responsibilities:**

- 8.1. Customers play a vital role in helping us to keep homes safe. We will ask our customers to:
- 8.2. Follow all advice and guidance issued by Nehemiah Housing in respect of managing and controlling the return of damp and condensation. Details of the advice we offer on managing condensation can be found on our website.
- 8.3. To let us know where all reasonable efforts have been made to manage and control condensation and mould, and this has not been successful.
- 8.4. Frequently check for damp mould and immediately report any damp and mould issues to us as soon as they become visible. This includes any signs of rising or penetrating damp.
- 8.5. Report any necessary repairs to their home that will affect the control of damp and condensation (for example faulty extractor fan, inability to open windows, lack of heating, roof leaks etc.)
- 8.6. Keep to agreed appointment times and allow access for inspections and to carry out remedial works to address any damp and mould issues.

- 8.7. To have household contents insurance which should include cover against flood damage.
- 8.8. Undertake any redecoration following repair works carried out for damp and mould issues. We may contribute towards the cost of redecoration where repairs carried out to the external parts of the building have caused internal damage.
- 8.9. Ensure that any installed monitoring equipment is kept plugged in and is not interfered with.

## **9.00 Exemptions**

- 9.01 We will not undertake damp, and mould work in any homes where it would not be our responsibility. Where damp and mould are occurring within a leasehold or shared ownership property, leaseholders are responsible for managing and maintaining their properties including damp and condensation in accordance with their lease agreement. We can, however, provide advice to leaseholders on how they may be able to manage these situations.

## **10.00 TRAINING & AWARENESS**

We will ensure that all our staff and contractors have training to raise awareness and create a good understanding of this policy.

We will ensure that all our staff, and contractors have training to raise awareness of and create a good understanding of damp and mould issues, related issues (i.e., health), cases and measures to combat these.

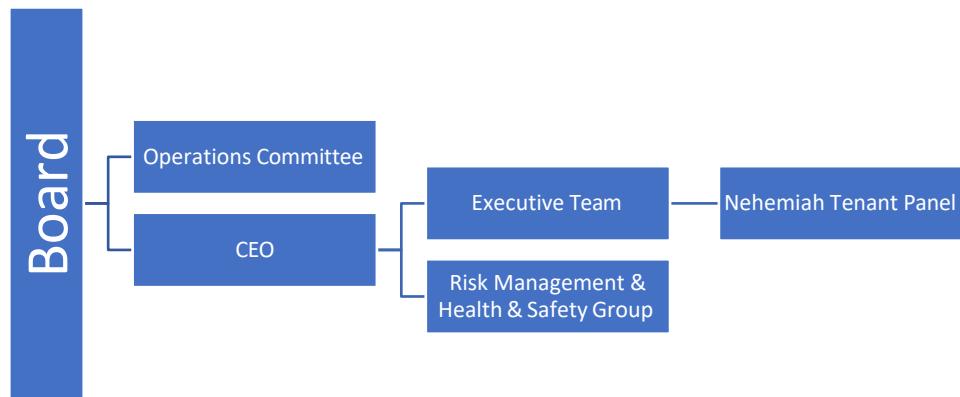
We will understand our stock, archetypes and components of properties that are likely to suffer from damp and mould.

We will provide our Officers with equipment to assess damp in properties and find resolution to the problem if it is our responsibility.

We will be using our website to publicise videos advising how damp and mould can occur and to create awareness to tenants as to how they can try and prevent

## 11.0 LEADERSHIP ON DAMP AND MOULD

The Board takes effective oversight and has overall responsibility for the management of damp and mould which may be present in our stock profile. In terms of how this is reflected from a governance perspective in operation this is illustrated in the diagram below.



The Board is cognisant of the fact that damp and mould have the potential to negatively impact on the lives of our tenants and has included damp and mould within its strategic risk register, from December 2022. Damp and mould is one of the top 3 strategic risks that the Board reviews. In addition, the Board has sight of a Damp and Mould Performance Dashboard from 23 February 2023 onwards, which provides a snapshot of instances of damp and mould and our progress in addressing it both proactively and reactively. The Board recognises that this will be a dynamic report reflecting changes over time, when it sees this report quarterly.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Person Responsible	Outlined Responsibilities
Operations Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Overall responsibility for ensuring this document is implemented and adhered to.</li><li>Ensuring statutory and legislative requirements.</li></ul>
Property Services Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Monitoring open cases to ensure they are being updated with communication, details of data loggers and inspections arranged Damp &amp; Mould Policy &amp; Procedure</li><li>Monitoring and reporting on completed cases to ensure adequate evidence is saved and the system updated.</li><li>Ensure case triaging is in accordance with this document and that adequate information is recorded on the system to progress cases.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that cases are assigned to the relevant contractor and tasks sent to Property Services Officers for Inspections</li> </ul>
Property Services Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Triaging cases following thorough review of all relevant supporting information.</li> <li>Ensuring cases are managed in line with agreed workflow, HomeMaster system is updated and Tenants kept up to date with progress.</li> <li>Keeping tenants updated on the progress of works required including contacting tenants on completion of works to ensure all works complete and issue resolved.</li> <li>Undertaking post inspect works.</li> <li>Monitoring remote damp and mould equipment and arranging inspections for those at risk of mould and condensation.</li> </ul>
Property Services Trainee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring cases are managed in line with agreed workflow, HomeMaster system is updated and Tenants kept up to date with progress.</li> <li>Keeping tenants updated on the progress of works required including contacting tenants on completion of works to ensure all works complete and issue resolved.</li> <li>Undertaking post inspect works.</li> </ul>
Property Services Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting and overseeing damp and mould cases including providing an assurance statement each quarter to Operations Director confirming cases are being reviewed and managed</li> </ul>
All Members of Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting of Damp and Mould identified during property inspection/visit or phone call/in person conversation with tenants to Property team.</li> </ul>
Housing Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management of no access reports following no access procedure, progressing cases up to and including injunctions</li> <li>Manage property damage/neglect under the terms of the tenancy agreement</li> </ul>
Supported Housing Officers (Older Persons Accommodations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting of Damp and Mould identified during property inspection/visit or phone call/in person conversation with tenants to Property team.</li> </ul>
Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting of Damp and Mould identified during inspection or completion of works to Nehemiah on the same day.</li> <li>Reporting emergency repair to Nehemiah</li> </ul>

	<p>immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing adequate training to operatives working on Nehemiah properties and ensuring robust reporting frameworks.</li> </ul>
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## 12.0 LESSON CAPTURING AND LEARNING

Nehemiah now arranges fortnightly, meetings regarding complaints. Any damp and mould cases that has leads to a complaint will be recorded and discussed, a lesson capture will be brought up were we will review what has happened and what can be learnt, at times more training may be needed for the tenant, about how to prevent, and as soon as possible when signs show either try to clean down or notify a member of Nehemiah Housing. If additional ventilation is needed this can be organised.

## 13.0 CONSIDERATION OF VULNERABILITY

Nehemiah Housing recognises that our tenants could be vulnerable for many reasons. They might be:

- Prison leavers
- Have mental health problems
- Be recovering from, drug or alcohol dependencies
- Have a disability
- Have autism spectrum condition
- Be receiving welfare benefits
- Have learning difficulties
- Be living with, or escaping from, domestic abuse

Because of all these instances, if damp and mould is reported or found in the property whilst we are inspecting this will be reported and booked for remedial works in line with the severity of the findings.

## 14.0 POST INSPECTIONS

Post inspections will be carried out every **three to six months** on the most serious damp and mould cases or especially, where we know a tenant is vulnerable and unable to carry out any works for themselves or report that damp is occurring within their home.

## 15.0 APPEALS

Any customer who is not satisfied with our approach in assessing and managing their damp and mould concerns can make a formal complaint.

If the customer is dissatisfied with actions and decisions made under this policy, it will be dealt with under our Customer Complaints Policy.

## **16.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The damp and mould policy has been Equality Impact Assessed (EIA) required? YesWhen was EIA conducted and by who?

The EIA conducted by Head of Governance & Company Secretary on the 13 August 2025.

## **17.0 REVIEW DATE**

This policy will be reviewed **yearly**, or when a change in good practice has occurred, or Legislation makes the necessary review.

This Policy should be read in-conjunction with the Repairs and Major Works Policy, Tenancy Agreement and Rechargeable Repairs.

## **Crib Sheet Example/Guidance to Tenants**

### **Damp and Mould Checklist**

#### Produce less moisture

- Keep the kitchen door shut and leave the windows open and/or extractor fan on when cooking.
- Ensure all washing is hung outside if possible. Avoid drying it on radiators. If you need to dry clothes indoors, open the window and close the door of the room where the clothes are drying, so that moisture can escape outside rather than circulate around your home.
- Ensure your home is not overcrowded. More people and pets living in your home means there will be more moisture produced.
- Remove excess moisture.  
Dry your windows and windowsills every morning as well as surfaces in the kitchen or bathroom that has become wet.
- Open the bathroom window and/or keep the extractor fan on when taking a shower or bath.
- Keep trickle vents in windows open. They are designed to ventilate your accommodation without causing draughts.
- Open the bedroom windows (for up to 20 minutes) in the morning and throw back the sheets or duvet to air the bed and bedding. A window slightly open is as good as one fully open. (Remember to close your windows for security when you go out).

#### **Heat your home**

- Having a medium-to-low level of heat throughout the house by keeping the heating on at low all day in cold weather will help to control condensation. Heating one room to a high level and leaving other rooms cold makes condensation worse in the unheated rooms. It will cost more initially to warm the walls, but when the walls are dry your heating bills will reduce.
- Do not put your heating on for short periods of time (one hour or less) – this will make the problem worse. The air will absorb moisture quicker than the walls can warm up.
- When the heating is turned off the air will cool quickly and condensation will be formed, cooling the walls further.

- Try to keep your home properly heated. It usually helps to have a low background temperature of at least 15 degrees in all rooms.

### **Try to remove mould growth whilst contacting your Landlord.**

- Mould growth should be removed as soon as you see it.
- Where there is mould wipe down or spray walls and window frames with a fungicidal wash that carries a HSE 'approval number' or a weak water and bleach solution.
- Do not remove mould by using a brush or vacuum cleaner as this may disturb the mould spores and can increase the risk of breathing problems.

### **Ventilate your home**

- Make sure you are 'cross-ventilating' your home – opening a small window downstairs and a small one upstairs (they should ideally be on opposite sides of the house or diagonally opposite if you live in a flat). At the same time, open the interior room doors, this will allow drier air to circulate throughout your home. This cross-ventilation should be carried out for about 30 minutes each day.
- Ventilate your kitchen and bathroom for about 20 minutes after use by opening a small top window. Use an extractor fan if possible.
- Keep a small gap between large pieces of furniture and the walls, and where possible place wardrobes and furniture against internal walls.
- Do not over-ventilate your accommodation by leaving the windows open as your walls will lose all the heat stored in them. Only open the windows for a short period at a time so that any moisture is able to escape. Then close your windows, leaving a small gap of about 5mm. It is advised to open the window slightly anytime that condensation is forming on the glass.

### **Version Control**

<b>Version No:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Author:</b>	<b>Reason:</b>
1	Feb 2023	Property Services Manager	New policy - discussion document
2	May 2023	Property Services Manager	Amendments
3	July 2023	Property Services Manager	Amendments
4	August 2024	Property Services Manager	Amended Policy following Audit
5	August 2025	Property Services Manager	Amended policy following Post Inspections Advice & Awaab's law