



BURY HOUSING SERVICES

Damp, Mould, and Condensation Policy

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Damp, Mould, and Condensation Policy (DMC) 2023-2026

Introduction

Bury Housing Services acknowledges we must play a lead role in developing and ensuring attractive, clean, and safe neighbourhoods and properties. In developing this overarching policy, we hope to meet our customers' priorities, local needs, and Bury Council's key objectives.

The aim of this policy is to deliver on Bury Housing Service's objectives, "ensuring customers are at the heart of our services" and "Property First".

Bury Housing Services has a specific requirement that we meet all applicable statutory requirements and provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

We shall consult and actively work in close partnership with our customers, other residents, and relevant stakeholders.

This policy and associated procedure will consider recommendations in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – Oct 2021. For further information please use the link below.

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Spotlight-report-Damp-and-mould-final.pdf>

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The policy aims to assist in the delivery of a DMC and remedial service that will be able to:

- Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way.
- 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 and mould 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 mould and condensation.
- Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.
- Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and mould and condensation problems.
- Ensure that the structure and fabric of our properties are protected from deterioration and damage resulting from DMC.
- Proactively tackle/manage the causes of DMC through robust procedures, analysis, and service delivery.
- Enhance the living conditions of our tenants.
- Enhance the service provided to tenants in managing this area of work.
- Enhance the understanding of our stock in relation to DMC and have proactive programmes for managing this issue.
- Ensure that our retrofit programmes have a consideration of the impact of DMC.
- Reduce the risk of expensive legal disrepair claims.
- Reduce the risk of reputational damage.

2.0 Bury Housing Service's approach

We will:

2.1 Investigate to determine the causes of damp, mould and condensation and carry out remedial repairs and actions in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

2.2 Diagnose the cause of damp correctly and deliver effective solutions based on the ethos of dealing with the cause of the damp not just the symptom and wherever possible "fixing first time".

2.3 Promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage DMC.

2.4 Ensure that all our staff have training and are aware of and understand the delivery of the service that will meet the aims of this policy.

2.5 Ensure that only competent staff, contractors and directly employed operatives are to carry out any works.

2.6 Inform tenants of any findings of the investigations following a property visit. This will include identifying the probable causes of DMC recommending effective solutions and all necessary remedial works / actions / enhancements and the estimated timescales to complete the works /measures. This will be communicated to the tenant keeping them up to date with their enquiry through the process from inception to completion.

2.7 Take responsibility for insulating the tenants' home in accordance with Decent Homes Standard, to reduce the likelihood of condensation occurring. Please see link below for further information.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7812/138355.pdf

We will:

2.8 Take responsibility for maintaining a tenant's home to avoid penetrating and rising damp and for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.

2.9 Undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of DMC, for example and not limited to, installation of mechanical extract fans, fresh air vents, repairing existing insulation. These measures will be supported and explained via specialist consultant and contractor reports.

2.10 Remedial works will only be carried out where it is reasonable and practical to do so. We will have regard to the constraints of the existing building design and structure and will take a sensible approach in finding appropriate solutions.

2.11 Make good internal surfaces following any successful remedial work carried out ensuring that surfaces are prepared to a condition ready for the tenant to redecorate.

2.12 Mould wash will only be carried out where mould is found to be persistent or extensive and cannot be controlled by either the tenant or STH.

2.13 In some cases remedial work may not be necessary requiring additional support and advice to be given to the tenant on managing and controlling the occurrences of DMC.

2.14 Make reasonable attempts to access the property to inspect and carry out the works in line with the no access and enforcement policy and procedures.

2.15 Will not be able to control condensation damp where it is unreasonable or impractical to do so or if any remedial action would be ineffective for example: In these circumstances the tenant will be notified in writing as to the available options and actions.

Poor construction / design (not meeting current construction and living standards) for example:

- Cold bridging areas in the fabric of the building that cannot be eliminated.

Non habitable rooms / For example:

- Out –buildings / sheds that have been converted including linking buildings between the house and outbuilding and other add-on structures.
- Unheated / uninsulated semi external toilets and storerooms.

2.16 Our target times for DMC initial inspections are 10 working days from the initial tenant contact. Our target timescale for completing works required is 28 working days from the point of inspection. This may be extended depending on the extent of

the works required, and whether the customer must be temporarily rehoused while the works are completed.

2.17 Under certain exceptional circumstances reasonable adjustments will be made, where the tenant is unable to carry out mould washes or redecoration.

2.18 Where Internal conditions within a home are influencing health and wellbeing of the occupants or are preventing inspections or remedial works being carried out, Bury Housing Services will provide support and assistance to review the tenant's options that may include moving to more appropriate alternative suitable accommodation.

2.19 Effective remedial action will not be possible in these instances until the situation(s) has been resolved.

2.20 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 property. The tenant will be supported through this process to find suitable accommodation.

Taking responsibility

2.21 Tenants must immediately report to Bury Housing Services evidence of any damp issues being encountered in their homes. This includes defective equipment to control and reduce the impact of DMC, (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, lack of heating etc.) in accordance with the tenancy agreement conditions.

2.22 The tenant should regularly check for DMC and clean signs of DMC as soon as they are discovered. Managing DMC guidance can be found on the Bury Housing Services website.

2.23 Clean mould from clothes, fabrics, carpets, and furnishings etc.

2.24 Follow all advice and guidance issued by Bury Housing Services on managing and controlling damp and condensation. This information can be found on Bury Housing Services website.

2.25 During any DMC works every effort will be made to protect the tenants fixtures, fittings, and possessions.

2.26 If following an inspection by the Bury Housing Services surveyor the outcome shows that all reasonable measures are in place for the tenant to manage DMC, further advice and support will be given to the tenant.

2.27 If the tenant fails to take the advice and reasonable steps to reduce DMC, the tenant may be recharged for any resulting repairs required which are result of this neglect. As per the terms of the Tenancy Agreement.

2.28 The tenancy agreement recommends that the tenant arranges adequate household contents insurance. Which should include cover against damage caused by the effects of DMC.

2.29 Where tenants are considering converting / using non – habitable buildings and spaces/rooms they can seek advice and permission from the Bury Housing Services in accordance with the tenancy agreement conditions.

2.30 Redecoration:

- Where remedial works and mould wash treatments have been successfully undertaken by Bury Housing Services, the tenant is responsible for redecoration.

2.31 Allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of remedial works (in accordance with the tenancy agreement).

3.0 Leaseholder responsibilities

3.1 Leaseholders will manage and maintain their properties including DMC in accordance with their lease agreement. Bury Housing Services do not carry out DMC remedial works to leasehold properties.

3.2 Any neglect by the leaseholder to manage or carry out repairs for which they are responsible for that consequently have a direct impact on the condition of a council owned property will be dealt with in accordance with the lease.

4.0 Monitoring

4.1 The Business Manager – Compliance will monitor the effectiveness of the policy in terms of the delivery and whether the policy aims have been met. This will be reported to the Director of Assets via performance review reports.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 For assurance that this policy is operating in practice, Board and Senior Leadership Team will receive regular updates on its implementation, performance, and any incidents of non-compliance.

5.2 Bury Housing Service's Director of Assets is responsible for:

- The effective implementation and delivery of the policy.

- Monitoring the performance and delivery.
- Reviewing the policy
- Developing the processes and procedures that are in line with the policy.
- Ensure that the policy aims, and terms are adhered to.

6.0 Review

6.1 The Policy will be reviewed every three years and in response to:

- Legislative changes.
- Council strategy or policy changes; or
- Ineffective policy terms.

7.0 Further Information & Support

England and Wales

- Housing Act 1985
- Homes (Fitness For Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Health And Safety At Work Act 1974
- Landlord And Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health And Safety Recording System
- Defective Premises Act 1973 (Section 4)
- Home Standard – Inc. Decent Homes Standard
- Neighbourhood And Community Standard
- Tenancy Standard
- Tenant Involvement And Empowerment Standard
- Bury Housing Services Complaints Policy
- Tenancy Agreements
- Safeguarding Policy
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Environmental Health Protection Act 1990
- Right To Repair



Equality Impact Assessment Form

What is being assessed:

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- Ensure that tenants have access to and/or are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.
- Comply with statutory requirements and good practice.
- Maximise the available budgets and ensure that they are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp and condensation problems.

- Ensure that the structure and fabric of our properties are protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and condensation.
- Proactively tackle/manage the causes of damp and mould through robust procedures, analysis, and service delivery.
- Enhance the living conditions of our residents.
- Enhance the service provided to residents in managing this area of work.
- Enhance the understanding of our stock in relation to damp and mould and have proactive programmes for managing this issue.
- Ensure that our retrofit programmes have a consideration of the impact of damp and mould.
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The existing policy previously approved by board in March 2023 has been reviewed by the Customer Review Group. The group feels that a policy review is required as the existing policy is not user friendly and has timescales missing from key actions. The intention is that the CRG will review a revised policy in draft to be submitted for approval by board in December.