



DAMP AND MOULD POLICY

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| Date of Approval: | March 2024 |
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1.0 Purpose

Calvay Housing Association aims to ensure its homes are maintained to a high standard through the delivery of efficient and effective repair and maintenance services.

Landlords must ensure that the accommodation they provide is fit for purpose and must be free from serious hazards including damp and mould. The Association recognises that maintaining high quality, secure homes and environments can improve the lives of residents and achieve high levels of resident satisfaction.

The aim of this policy is to set out the principles for managing damp, mould and condensation (referred to as damp) in the Association's homes and to prevent potential health and safety risks to residents and drives forward an agenda of proactive action to tackle and manage the causes of damp and mould.

The Association will provide staff with clear operational procedures, guidance, and knowledge to ensure that any reports of damp and mould are managed efficiently, consistently and in line with this policy and procedures.

This policy provides a framework for managing damp in its properties and communal areas.

The policy also sets out how the Association will support residents to minimise the risk of damp occurring in homes and encourage residents to report any evidence of damp promptly.

This policy also sets out how the Association is meeting its legal and statutory repairing responsibilities and complying with relevant legislation and principles and practices detailed in the Social Housing Charter.

The policy and associated procedures will include the recommendations made in the Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould published in October 2021.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all Committee members, residents where the Association has a repairing obligation, members of staff whether employees of Calvay Housing, freelance, casual, or temporary agency staff irrespective of grade, position, or length of service responsible for the management of repairs and maintenance within the Association.

The policy applies to the management of property owned by the Association and subject to a Scottish Secure Tenancy, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, a Shared Ownership Occupancy Agreement or Lease.

The policy also applies to common areas where the Association is the factor.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Association's Repair and Maintenance Policy.

3.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

- **Damp** - refers to any type of damp whether it be rising, penetrating and/or condensation dampness that results in the formation of mould.
- **Rising damp** – Moisture absorbed from the ground into a wall, will often leave a “tide” mark on affected walls.
- **Penetrating damp** – The process of moisture moving through exterior walls of a building to the interior.
- **Condensation** – When moist air which reaches a cool surface, the moisture will condense into water, forming surface damp.

4.0 Legal and Good Practice Requirements

This policy aims to comply with the following legislation and good practice guidance:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001, 2006, 2010 and 2014
- Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard)
- Right to Repair (Housing Scotland Act 1987 as amended 2001 and 2010)
- Right to Compensation for Improvements (Housing Scotland Act 1987 as amended 2001 and 2010)
- Scottish Social Housing Charter 2012
- Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- SFHA Good Practice Guidance Repairs and Maintenance – 2012
- Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 2002
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Equalities Act 2010
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- The Building (Scotland) Regulations & Building Standards 2017
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

- Asbestos Regulations (The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012)
- Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011
- Health and Safety Executive Guidance
- Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report October 2021
- SFHA/ALACHO/CIH/SHR Briefing – Putting Safety First
- Scottish Government: Implementing the Housing Scotland Act parts 1 and 2 advisory and statutory guidance for local authorities Volume 4 Tolerable standard chapter 5 rising damp and penetrating damp
- Housing Quality Network - Implementing Awaab's Law

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

| Task | Job Holder Responsible |
|--|--|
| Overall responsibility for monitoring performance on damp and for approval of this policy. | Management Committee |
| Ultimate accountability and responsibility for the development and implementation of this policy. | Director |
| Responsibility for the practical delivery and implementation of this policy and for identifying amendments and areas of improvement. | Operations Manager |
| Procurement of suitably qualified contractors | Operations Manager/ Senior Maintenance Officer |
| Responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of this policy. Ensuring the appropriate recording of data and monitoring/reporting. | Senior Maintenance Officer |
| Responsible for inspection, specification of works and contractor management. | Maintenance Officer |
| Post inspection surveys of the contractor's work on site. | Maintenance Officer |

5.1 Landlord Responsibilities

Calvary Housing aims to ensure its homes are maintained to a high standard through the delivery of efficient and effective repair and maintenance services.

Landlords must ensure the accommodation they provide is free from serious hazards including damp and mould and homes are fit for habitation. Additionally, the Association recognises that maintaining high quality, secure homes and environments can improve the lives of residents and achieve high levels of resident satisfaction.

The Association will provide staff with clear operational procedures, guidance, and knowledge to ensure that any reports of damp and mould are managed efficiently, consistently and in line with this policy and associated procedures.

The Association is committed to providing and maintaining homes that are free from damp and will respond efficiently to address issues of damp where identified. The Association will ensure that:

- Residents are provided with a range of ways to report damp and will be treated in a fair and consistent way.
- Its homes are warm, safe, wind and watertight and provide healthy environments for residents.
- Vulnerable residents are provided with the appropriate support to resolve issues through staff support or external statutory/ non-statutory agencies.
- Residents are provided with details of the complaints procedure and how complaints can be raised with the Association.
- Appropriate investigations of damp are carried out to establish the source of the issue.
- Reasonable repair and improvement solutions to address any issues are implemented through a system of casework management.
- Residents have access to and/or provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling factors which could cause damp in their homes.
- Feedback is obtained from residents in new homes and implemented in future new homes.
- That the fabric of buildings it owns, or factors are managed and maintained to prevent deterioration and damage resulting from damp.
- A risk-based approach is adopted to prioritise and focus on properties susceptible to damp utilising stock condition information, repairs information and feedback from residents.
- Proactive assessments of stock condition surveys are undertaken.
- Improvement and retrofit programmes of work will be carried out where damp consistently affects a particular property archetype.
- Staff are supplied with appropriate training and equipment capable of identifying cold spots, thermal bridging etc.
- Where appropriate will collect humidity and temperature sensor data to identify the potential for damp in homes.
- Where there are known issues of damp in empty properties works will be carried out as part of the void works to address the issue. This work will be managed in line with the Association's Void Policy.
- Void checks will be enhanced to include the checking of extraction and ventilation systems.
- There is compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements and best practice when dealing with cases of damp.
- We will manage data robustly to ensure accurate and comprehensive records are maintained for the building and the customer to ensure the full history of issues associated with damp is recognised to inform actions and remediation.
- The Board receives quarterly reports on the number of homes affected by damp and performance information on the management of cases.

5.2 Tenant Responsibilities

Tenants have a responsibility within the tenancy agreement to immediately report any repairs. This includes where there is evidence of mould, rising and penetrating damp and faulty equipment that will affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, heating system failure etc). The Association will publish information to tenants via but not limited to newsletters, online sources and the tenant handbook.

Once a repair has been reported, the tenant is responsible for:

- Allowing access for inspections and for the carrying out of all remedial works.
- The tenancy agreement recommends that the tenant arranges adequate household contents insurance for the home that they occupy.
- Where tenants are considering making any changes within their home: for example, converting rooms into one room, adding extensions, converting non-habitable buildings/spaces into habitable, they must seek advice and permission from us in accordance with their tenancy agreement.

Tenants can help reduce the conditions that lead to condensation dampness by:

- Keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., drying laundry outside (where possible) and keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- Adequately heating rooms.
- Keeping the house well-ventilated e.g., opening windows during cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed in their home is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.
- Follow all advice and guidance issued by us on managing humidity and moisture in the home which can lead to condensation. This information can be found on the Calvay Housing Association website. The Association will follow up with customers who have previously had damp treated within their property to ensure that there has not been a re-occurrence.

5.3 Leased Properties

Organisations who lease our properties have different responsibilities to that of a normal tenant. Refer to the specific organisation's lease prior to committing to action. As a principle the Association is responsible for the fabric of the building and internal components (including ventilation).

This means that penetrating damp, rising damp and leaks would be the Association's responsibility to repair.

Issues such as decoration, mould removal and treatment would be the responsibility of the organisation who leased the property and not the Association. Issues with damp in leased properties should be identified to the Operations Manager and the Senior Housing Officer to be addressed at liaison meetings.

6.0 Effective Inspection and Diagnosis

The Association will inspect all repair requests reported in relation to damp within 2 working days. Where required the Association will seek support from its Mechanical and Electrical consultants and specific damp and mould consultants.

Repairs to address damp will often require multiple trades in attendance and whilst the resident is waiting for the repair to be carried out, the Association will consider implementing interim measures to help to address the damp in the property, e.g., dehumidifiers with an allowance to help with the running costs.

Where the resident is required to temporarily move out to allow the works to take place a decant will be arranged in line with the Association's decant process.

6.1 Staff Training

All frontline staff will receive general awareness training on damp to allow them to identify and respond to issues relating to damp and will be made aware of the Association's policy and procedures.

This training will be relevant for those staff visiting residents in their homes. This will allow front line staff to identify instances of damp in order that a proactive approach may be adopted to address damp in the Association's homes. Specific technical training for staff dealing with damp and mould will be provided to staff working at Officer level and above.

Staff named within roles and responsibilities will be expected to read and understand the policy. Staff will be asked to refresh their knowledge of the policy and sign declarations to the state they have understood their roles and responsibilities within the policy.

6.2 Case Management

All cases of damp will be recorded and managed via the housing management system. Cases will be tracked through the system and reports will be developed to monitor case management, identify trends and themes and to monitor the number of properties affected by damp. Officers within the Maintenance Team will be responsible for the overall management of cases.

Where a customer reports damp and then fails to engage, the Association will follow a process to attempt to gain access, ultimately with the threat of action under conditions of tenancy for failure to maintain property.

6.3 Use of Qualified Contractors

The Association will ensure that suitably qualified contractors are used when addressing repairs linked to damp. With no specific qualification, governing body or ISO Standards the Association will ensure that contractors use approved products and have appropriate training in using these products.

6.4 Planned Programmes of Work

Stock condition data, repairs information, resident feedback and collection of data relating to damp will allow the Association to understand where similar properties are affected by damp. This will allow the Association to plan programmes of work where particular properties are affected by damp.

7. Supporting Residents

All new residents will be provided with information and communication on the risks of damp and steps they should take in the home to limit the risk of damp. This information will be included in newsletters periodically and information will also be included on the website, social media platforms and displayed in the Calvay Centre.

Residents will be encouraged to report any cases of damp through publications and via social media and support will be provided to vulnerable residents, e.g., translation services or sourcing funds and grants to help with fuel costs.

Where repeated decoration is required an offer of a decoration voucher can be offered at the discretion of the Senior Maintenance Officer to help support tenants.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

Relevant information relating to damp in the Association's stock will be held on the housing management system. The way in which data is captured will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that the data is easy to access, relevant and available to members of the team. The data should be capable of providing analysis on trends and themes and allow for the production of KPI information relating to damp.

Key KPI information will be agreed and presented to the Board quarterly to allow for ongoing scrutiny in the management of damp cases.

9. Operational Delivery

The Policy will be supported by a range of procedures that allow staff to effectively deliver the aims of this policy. The Association will ensure that all relevant staff receive appropriate training and support to meet the requirements of the Policy and Procedures.

10. Feedback and Complaints

The Association aims to continuously improve its approach to managing damp in its homes and will adapt processes in response to resident complaints; resident satisfaction information; input from tenant scrutiny groups and other resident groups; internal audit and sector best practice. Tenants who are unhappy with the service they have received in relation to the management of damp within their property have the right to complain and should be managed in line with the Association's Complaints Policy

11. Equal Opportunities

Any personal data processed under this policy / procedure must be processed in accordance with UK data protection laws. For further information please refer to our Data Protection Policy and associated policies and procedures. Any queries relating to the processing activities should be referred to our Corporate Services Manager or Data Protection Officer

12. General Data Protection Regulation

The Association will treat all personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulations and our own Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Procedures. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided within our Customer Privacy Notice.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed at a minimum of every 3 years or earlier if deemed necessary due to legislative, best practice or other changes.

14. Associated Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Alterations and Improvement Policy
- Leasing Policy
- Maintenance Policy
- Right to Repair Policy
- Void Management Policy