

DAMP & MOULD POLICY



Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy			
Last Reviewed	January 2026	Next Review	January 2027
Responsible Officer	Director of Operations		

Policy Statement

Freebridge Community Housing (FCH) is committed to ensuring that our homes and communal areas are good quality, well maintained and safe. Damp and mould can have a serious impact on the health and well-being of our tenants and their families, cause property damage, and damage items stored within them.

This policy sets out our approach to dealing with damp and mould in our homes and communal areas

We will take a proactive approach to damp and mould and provide dry, warm, healthy, and safe homes for our residents which are free from serious hazards.

Policy Detail

Scope

This policy explains how Freebridge will control, manage and eliminate damp, including but not limited to:

- Identifying the types of damp: rising, penetrating and condensation dampness, including internal leaks
- Identifying the responsibilities for Freebridge and our customers in dealing with damp and condensation
- Offering guidance, advice, and assistance throughout the process to all customers living in our properties
- Data gathering and reporting, identifying proactive methods in mitigating risk of all dampness

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Repairs Policy.

Who the policy applies to

- Customers who rent their home under a tenancy agreement and customers occupying under a licence
- Customers who own their home through shared ownership where Freebridge has a repair obligation under the terms of the lease
- All communal areas
- Emergency or temporary accommodation

Principles

Freebridge will:

- Comply with statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements and good practice
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable repair solutions and improvements to eliminate damp including, managing, and controlling condensation
- Ensure that the fabric of our properties is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp, mould and condensation
- Respond to all reports of damp and condensation and complete any repair works/measures in line with this and our Repairs policy. This will be dependent on the severity and urgency of the problem, the complexity of the solution and the repair works/actions required
- We will make reasonable attempts to access the property to inspect and carry out the works. All logged repairs must have evidence of at least three attempts to contact the customer
- We will follow up each completed repair within six months of any damp and mould repair work being carried out
- Ensure that customers are treated in a fair and consistent way with empathy and respect
- Focus on working in partnership with customers ensuring that a safe and healthy internal environment is provided
- Always communicate effectively in relation to the delivery of our responsive repairs service and provide a range of options for customers to report repairs
- Ensure that customers have access to and are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation

- Ensure budgets are used effectively and efficiently to deal with damp, mould and condensation problems
- Implement new data quality and insight measures to assist with informing us of the possible risks to our properties so that we can undertake proactive measures to eliminate damp, mould and condensation before it becomes a problem for our customers

Definitions

- **Damp:** The build-up of moisture in a property which can lead to the growth of mould and other micro-organisms
- **Condensation:** When moisture generated in the property cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). Normal occupant activities such as showering, drying laundry and cooking can generate moisture. If this moisture is unable to escape from the property, it can build up in the air and over time and can lead to damp and mould growth
- **Penetrating Damp:** Water that gets into the property from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors
- **Rising Damp:** Moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the property in contact with the ground (walls and floors)
- **Traumatic Damp:** Can be caused by leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths or sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the property. It can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding
- **Mould:** A type of fungus which grows in moist environments. It can cause adverse health effects, as well as damage to buildings. Mould can often look like black, white or green patches

Conditions that may increase the risk of condensation are:

- Lack of ventilation within the property
- Inadequate heating
- Inadequate loft insulation
- High humidity
- Overcrowding

Roles and responsibilities

Awaab's Law – Emergency and Significant Hazards

The Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, also known as Awaab's Law, introduces regulations to ensure that all emergency hazards and all damp and mould hazards that present a significant risk of harm to customers are resolved in fixed timeframes.

For a hazard to fall under Awaab's Law repair requirements, it must:

- a) be a part of buildings or land for which we are responsible for
- b) be in our control to fix
- c) not be damage that is a result of breach of contract by the customer
- d) result from defects, disrepair or lack of maintenance
- e) be a significant or emergency hazard

Awaab's Law covers hazards defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (England) Regulations 2005, except for overcrowding.

Emergency Hazard

- An emergency hazard is defined as 'posing an imminent and significant risk of harm to the health or safety' of an individual
- We will carry out an investigation within 24 hours of becoming aware of a potential emergency hazard. The investigation may be carried out either remotely or in-person if specifically requested by the customer
- We will provide the customer with a written summary within 3 working days of the investigation concluding. The written summary will include details about the nature of the hazard, actions taken and any further steps required. If all work is completed within 3 working days, a written summary may not be provided
- Throughout our investigation, we will factor in individual circumstances, including the age and physical and mental health of the customer to assess the likelihood of harm materialising and the potential severity of that harm in the specific circumstances.
- If an emergency hazard is confirmed to be present, we will complete the relevant safety works as soon as reasonably practicable but within 24 hours of the investigation concluding
- We will begin, or take steps to begin, any further supplementary works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding
- We will physically start work within 12 weeks and complete them to the required standard within a reasonable period of time

Significant Hazard

- A significant hazard is defined as 'posing a significant risk of harm to the health or safety' of an individual

- We will carry out an investigation within 10 working days of becoming aware of a potential significant hazard. The investigation may be carried out either remotely or in-person if specifically requested by the customer
- We will provide the customer with a written summary within 3 working days of the investigation concluding. The written summary will include details about the nature of the hazard, actions taken and any further steps required. In the event that all work is completed within 3 working days, a written summary will not be provided
- Throughout our investigation, we will factor in individual circumstances, including the age and physical and mental health of the customer to assess the likelihood of harm materialising and the potential severity of that harm in the specific circumstances
- If a significant hazard is confirmed to be present, we will complete the relevant safety works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding
- We will begin, or take steps to begin, any further supplementary works within 5 working days of the investigation concluding
- We will physically start work within 12 weeks and complete them to the required standard within a reasonable period of time

Hazards Summary Table

	Emergency Hazards	Significant Hazards
Investigate potential hazard	Within 24 hours	Within 10 working days
Start safety works	Within 24 hours	Within 5 working days
Send written summary	Within 3 working days	Within 3 working days
Plan or start additional works	Within 5 working days	Within 5 working days
Physically start additional works	Within 12 weeks	Within 12 weeks
Satisfactorily complete works	Within a reasonable time period	Within a reasonable time period

Please note that specific start and completion dates will be provided within the written summary.

Freebridge will always first consider whether the source of the damp and mould is a design, construction or maintenance issue which we can eliminate through work to the home.

We will:

- Diagnose the cause of damp correctly and deliver effective solutions based on the principle of dealing with the cause of the damp, not just the symptom and wherever possible fixing first time

- This will include identifying the possible causes of damp, recommending effective solutions and all necessary remedial works / actions / enhancements and the estimated timescales to complete the works; keeping the customer updated throughout the process from inception to completion
- Ensure that only competent contractors and our in house team will be employed to carry out any works and that the customer's possessions are adequately protected during the works
- Take responsibility for maintaining customers' homes to avoid penetrating and rising damp and for carrying out remedial action if these problems occur
- Undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation dampness. This may include but is not limited to upgraded ventilation system installation, improved indoor air movement and quality best practices
- Make good internal surfaces following any repairs work carried out ensuring that surfaces are prepared to a condition ready for the customer to redecorate. Where there is a need to redecorate following remedial work carried out by Freebridge, we will provide a decoration voucher to cover the cost of the materials needed to make good the decoration
- Promote and provide general advice and guidance, following a thorough investigation into the root cause, on how to minimise damp and condensation
- Ensure that all Freebridge employees and contractors have an awareness of the policy and receive adequate training to enable them to report issues of damp, mould and condensation and to support our customers
- Ensure that technical staff are trained and competent in the diagnosis of damp, condensation and mould issues
- Introduce a new data intelligence framework to enhance our customer and property information, which will shape our future investment programmes.

Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring that all our customers are able to access our Damp, Mould and Condensation services and will seek to make reasonable adjustments to do so.

Reasonable adjustments will depend on individual need but may include things such as:

- provision of auxiliary aids
- provision of information in alternative formats (e.g. large print, Braille, coloured paper etc.)
- allowing extra time for customers to provide access to their home (where it is safe to do so)
- use of email or telephone in preference to hard copy letters
- use of plain English or Easy Read service
- communication through a representative or intermediary

Customers can request reasonable adjustments or additional support at any time; where we are aware that a customer may require a reasonable adjustment, we will seek to provide these proactively.

Reporting & Process

Tenants can report damp and mould issues in their homes using a variety of channels. Once a tenant reports damp and mould in their home, it is passed to the damp and mould team for further diagnosis.

Upon reviewing the details provided, including any photos or videos submitted, the damp and mould team will assess the tenants report and allocate it to one of two stages listed below, ensuring that the appropriate level of action is taken based on the severity of the issue.

Our colleagues will also check for and report any signs of damp and mould during property visits that may not have been previously identified by the tenant. We also log cases raised by third parties, such as health workers or support agencies, acting on behalf of tenants, with their consent.

Additionally, jobs will be raised if we receive a complaint or if an enquiry is made by an MP or Councillor on behalf of a tenant.

This approach ensures all potential risks are identified and addressed, maintaining a safe and healthy living environment in all properties.

Decants

If the relevant safety work cannot be completed within the fixed timeframes, or it is unsafe for the occupants to remain in their home while the work is carried out, we will make arrangements for suitable alternative accommodation.

This may be on a day-by-day basis or a temporary decant to an alternative property. The customer will be supported through this process to find suitable accommodation.

In some cases, it may be necessary to re-house a customer, and their household, on a permanent basis if a medical professional advises that re-housing is the most suitable option. This will be considered in accordance with our **Allocations and Lettings and Moving Out Policies**.

Customer Responsibilities

- It is the customer's responsibility to immediately report any evidence of rising and penetrating damp (see definitions) 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)

- Customers must allow access for inspections and for the completion of all remedial works.
- Where customers 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. This is to ensure that the proposed alteration would not contribute to the accumulation of damp, mould, or condensation, as well as ensuring alterations comply with building control and planning guidelines

Customers will keep us informed about any changes to their individual or household circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- Pregnancy
- Weakened immune systems
- Pre-existing health conditions
- Mental health conditions
- Mobility issues
- Time spent in doors

This is particularly important when reporting repairs to ensure that we can accurately assess the level of risk involved and therefore, how we must respond appropriately given the specific circumstances of a household.

Assisting Our Customers

Where internal conditions within a home (for example, overcrowding and excessive hoarding of personal belongings) are influencing health and well-being of the occupants or are preventing inspections or repair works being carried out, we will provide support and assistance to review the customer's options which may include moving to more appropriate or alternative suitable accommodation.

Freebridge's Communities Team can provide customers with advice and assistance where they are struggling to pay energy bills or there are issues with energy supply.

We will also provide advice and guidance literature and by working with our customers through our customer engagement framework 'myfreebridge'.

We also recognise that some of our customers may need help when it comes to meeting their repair responsibilities. We may, entirely at our discretion, provide a service in addition to the statutory and contractual responsibilities, to assist our customers who may need support to meet the conditions of their tenancy agreement.

We will make this assessment with the customer based on their individual needs, including whether there is anyone else who might reasonably assist them, and whether there are any immediate risks to their health or safety. This may include an extension

to the scope of repairs which we carry out. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where decoration is required after works associated with damp and mould, decoration vouchers will be provided to assist with the provision of paint and equipment. Further consideration will be given to customers and their specific individual or family circumstances, with a view to providing assistance which may include painting of finished surfaces. The nature of the decoration will solely be at our discretion. (See also '[Accessibility](#)').

Monitoring

Activities covered under this policy will be subject to continuous performance monitoring with Key Performance Indicators reported to both the Operations Committee and Board to provide assurance.

This policy will be reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure compliance with statutory, regulatory and best practice requirements.

Periodic audits of this policy will be undertaken to ensure that the requirements are being undertaken consistently, with findings and any action required, reported to the Audit and Risk Committee of the Board.

To ensure the effectiveness of our damp and mould case management, post-inspections will be conducted using a combination of desktop audits and on-site visits for a sample of cases.

Where necessary, external third-party specialists may be engaged to carry out these inspections and surveys.