



## **REIDVALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

### **Damp and Mould Policy**

Policy Reviewed	26.06.24
Due for Review	June 2027
Author	Maintenance Manager

## POLICY SUMMARY

<b>Purpose:</b>	The purpose of this policy is to set out Reidvale Housing Association's approach in relation to managing damp and mould within our properties.
<b>Legislation / Guidance:</b>	The Association is a company under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, and a company regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Statutory Guidance The Scottish Social Housing Charter Requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator
<b>Regulatory Compliance</b>	Standard 1: The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.  Standard 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.  Standard 3: The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.  Standard 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.
<b>Linked Policies</b>	Maintenance Policy Rechargeable Repair Policy Complaints Policy Equality & Diversity Policy
<b>Financial Impact</b>	Low
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	Low
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	Yes
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	26.06.24
<b>Date approved by Management Committee</b>	26.06.24

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## 1 Purpose

- A recent publication highlighted an English based Housing Association's failure to act on reported dampness and mould, within one of its properties. Which resulted in the tragic death of a two-year-old, with the mould issue to be the primary cause. The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has acted promptly, by requesting all Scottish Housing Associations outline and evidence how they approach, damp, mould and condensation issues, what actions taken and how individual occurrences of condensation and mould are dealt with when raised by tenants.
- Reidvale Housing Association are acting immediately to safeguard its tenants, moving forward. This will also form part of the Tenants Health and Safety Compliance report, which will be reported to the Management Committee quarterly. It is also recognised that the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) have acted in a similar action of that of its English equivalent.
- The association wants to ensure that our tenants and communities have warm, safe, and healthy homes to live in and as a basic right, which should be fulfilled by the association.
- Estimates in the UK are that between 10-50% of homes are affected by condensation and damp conditions. Social Housing and low-income communities, where this is often prevalent, has been found to be caused by overcrowding, lack of appropriate heating, ventilation, and insulation, also lack of support and guidance from landlords.
- A purposeful approach to the prevention, treatment and remediation of these issues will benefit our tenants and communities. Moving forward our tools will include better data and recording of condensation and damp with an action plan, improved reporting and identification of condensation and mould, an end-to-end tenant's service with better joined up advice, guidance, and support. This includes a better use of innovative technology prevention schemes.

## 2 Introduction and Objectives

- The Association is committed to maintaining its homes to a high standard, which adds value to the home and surroundings. Maintaining high quality and secure homes can improve the lives of our tenants and achieve an elevated level of customer satisfaction.
- This policy document has been written to ensure that wherever possible, tenants are not adversely affected by the causes of condensation, damp or mould and drives forward, an agenda of initiative-taking action to tackle and manage and report on the causes of the above.

- This policy and associated procedures will consider recommendations made in a Housing Ombudsman Service Report – Spotlight on: Damp and Mould – October 2021. If any reports of guidance are issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator, then the association will act accordingly to any recommendations and will update the Policy and Procedures accordingly.
- The Associations stock profile includes 898 housing units across all located within the Dennistoun area of Glasgow.
  - Stock consists of 726 Victorian tenemental units built in the early 1900's.
  - 128 new build units constructed between the late 1980's and mid 1990's.
  - A retirement housing complex constructed in 1995 containing 44 sheltered units, a wardens office, communal laundry, kitchen and a common room.
- This Policy applies to the entire property portfolio under the control of the association and to all operations continued under its control without exception.

### **3 Key points of the Policy and our approach to managing dampness, mould and condensation**

- The association commits to;
- Provide and maintain a comfortable, warm, and healthy home, free from damp, condensation, mould, or disrepair for our tenants.
- Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way and to recognise that having a dampness or mould issues in a home can be distressing for our tenants and ensure we are supportive in our approach.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate, damp, mould including, managing, and controlling condensation.
- Work in partnership with tenants to resolve and understand how to reduce condensation, damp, and mould issues, also retain a register with action plans, surveys, and outcomes, which will be reported to the Management Committee on a quarterly basis.
- Ensuring that the fabric of our homes is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from, or contributing to, damp and mould issues.
- Undertake responsive repairs to alleviate damp and mould issues as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise damage to the fabric, fixtures, and fittings of the property.
- Enhance the understanding of the associations housing stock and the archetype of properties and components from the stock condition data, which have a higher likelihood to suffer from damp and mould.

- Plan resources to respond to anticipated higher demand of enquiries and required inspections and work in partnership with specialist companies for the provision of specialist survey reports, including making use of new technology such as linked environmental sensors that can be installed within reported problematic damp or mould homes and can be monitored online and to better understand cause and solution.
- Provide staff with the skills and testing equipment to identify and differentiate between signs of damp, condensation, mould and understand the causes and remedial action.
- To consider the issues of damp condensation and mould when designing investment programmes for example heating, ventilation, and insulation.
- To comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements, sector best practice and tenants' health and safety compliance

#### **4 Legislation and Statutory/Regulatory Requirements**

- In developing this policy and procedure, recognition was taken of the legislative requirements and good practice set out in the following documents:
  - Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
  - Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974.
  - Scottish Housing Quality standards (SHQS)
    - \* Meet the Tolerable Standards.
    - \* Be free from serious disrepair.
    - \* Be energy efficient.
    - \* Have modern facilities and services.
    - \* Be healthy, safe, and secure.
  - Energy Efficiency Standards in Social Housing (EESH 1&2).
- This policy and procedural document also define the Associations procedures to ensure the risks associated with condensation, damp and mould issues are properly addressed, assessed, and managed and, in doing so, ensuring that all relevant legal duties are discharged.

#### **5 Roles and Responsibilities**

- The following "Table 1" summarises the association's structure of responsibilities to ensure that those with the most appropriate daily operational functions can manage, supervise, and conduct condensation, damp, and mould related control measures as appropriate.

**Table 1**

Designation	Role Responsibility
Management Committee	The Management Committee are collectively responsible for providing leadership and direction on Health and Safety matters. The Damp and Mould Policy to be approved by the Management Committee.
Director	The Director will hold ultimate responsibility for the development and implementation of the Damp and Mould Policy.
Maintenance Manager / Maintenance Officer	The Maintenance Manager and Maintenance Officers hold delegated operational responsibility. Implementation and management of the policy and operational procedures for the management and control. Co- Ordinate and deliver on the operational compliance with the Damp and Mould Policy and Procedures. Provision should also be made to ensure that all staff within RHA are aware of who is responsible and ensure that provision is made for any training and development needs.
Management-Committee	Management-Committee will be responsible for periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the Damp and Mould Policy and Procedures. Considering reports by the Maintenance Officer on a quarterly basis. Acting immediately if any serious deficiencies are identified and escalating concerns to the Director.
Employees	All persons employed by RHA, must be aware of the Damp and Mould Policy and Procedures, ensuring that any works that maybe conducted on condensation damp or mould provides less disturbance to the tenants as possible and to always ensure their health and safety.

## 6 Damp and Mould Procedures

- The Damp and Mould Procedures have been prepared to ensure compliance with the Associations Damp and Mould Policy, as set out within this document and is produced for all operational levels for staff.

The following are actions that the association are undertaking immediately are;

- Producing Damp and Mould Policy and Procedures.
  - Producing Damp and Mould register which will record any issues and actions taken also hold all evidenced based actions, survey reports etc.
  - Damp and Mould issues and actions will also be reported within the associations Tenants Health & Safety Compliance report.
  - Damp and Mould issues and actions will be reported to the Management Committee on a quarterly cycle and the Policy will be updated on a three-yearly cycle unless new legislation is updated.
  - Providing information leaflets and updating the association website and also inclusion within the newsletter.
  - Awareness training for all front-line staff.
  - Specialist training for the Maintenance Officer.
  - Standardised inspection sheets to ensure robust and consistent approach.
  - The association will work with other like-minded, RSL's to ensure a common robust approach to damp and mould issues, as Tenants Health and Safety is paramount.
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- The association will also adopt a system of priority colour coding for condensation, damp and mould issues within its properties. This will also be included within the damp and mould register and adopted procedures.

Medium Priority	Urgent Priority	High Priority
Condensation	Damp	Mould

## 7 Monitoring and Compliance

- This Policy will be reviewed every three years and as required by legislation, regulation or internal organisational change. A quarterly report will also be submitted to the Services Sub-Committee and Management Committee.

## **8 Staff Training**

- 8.1 Reidvale Housing Association will ensure that all staff who are required to undertake work in the Damp and Mould process receive appropriate and regular training.
- 8.2 Clear procedures and guidelines will be maintained to ensure a consistent and equitable treatment of tenants seeking Damp and Mould work in their home.

## **9. Equality and Diversity**

- 9.1 Reidvale Housing Association is an equal opportunities organisation. We are committed to providing an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination. No person or group of persons applying for housing and housing services will be treated less favourably than any other persons or groups of persons because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

## **10. GDPR**

- 10.1 Reidvale Housing Association will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulation and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in our Fair Processing Notice.