



DAMP & MOULD POLICY SUMMARY 2023

1 Introduction

1.1 Mid Devon Housing wants to take every reasonable action to identify, remedy and provide advice on damp and mould in Council homes in order to ensure a safe, health and comfortable environment for our residents, as well as to protect the fabric of our buildings.

1.2 This Policy Summary details:

- How to report mould and damp
- What we will do in the event of anyone reporting this
- What we will do generally to minimise issues
- Our responsibilities
- Tenant responsibilities

2 Reporting Damp & Mould

2.1 Tenants and Leaseholders can report repairs by phone, email, letter, in person, on our website or through social media pages.

2.2 Damp and mould issues may also be identified by visiting professionals and housing officers, in which case, this will be reported back to the repairs service.

3 What we will do when you report Damp & Mould

3.1 All repairs coming through the Council's call centre will be triaged using a diagnostic script. This script has been created by combining knowledge from decades of specialist officer knowledge, industry best practice and tenant feedback. The script is designed to determine the most likely cause or causes of damp or mould, and to arrange for repairs or advice to combat this. It may be necessary for the script to be used more than once, as symptoms improve and change.

3.2 The Council shall investigate to determine the cause of damp, mould and condensation and carry out remedial repairs and actions in accordance with the tenancy agreement

4 What we will do to minimise issues

4.1 The Council will investigate the possible causes of dampness to deliver effective solutions, based on dealing with the cause of the damp not just the symptom.

- 4.2 Our staff will promote and provide general advice and guidance on how to manage damp and condensation.
- 4.3 The Council will inform the tenant of the findings of the investigations following the visit. This will include identifying the possible causes of damp, recommending effective solutions, all necessary remedial works and the estimated timescales to complete the works.
- 4.4 The causes of damp and mould are complex and in many cases, our tenants may need support to understand the causes of damp, mould and condensation, as well as how to avoid this. MDH will ensure that this education is in a range of formats including verbal, written, audio, visual and video.

5 The Council's Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Council is responsible for insulating homes in our management in accordance with Decent Homes Standard to help reduce the likelihood of condensation occurring.
- 5.2 The Council is responsible for maintaining a tenant's home to avoid penetrating dampness and to avoid rising damp in homes with a damp proof course or membrane by design, and for carrying out remedial action if these do occur.
- 5.3 The Council will undertake reasonable improvement works required to assist in the management and control of condensation damp, e.g. the installation of mechanical extractor fans, air vents and repairing existing insulation.
- 5.4 Remedial works will only be carried out where it is reasonable

6 Tenant Responsibilities

- 6.1 In accordance with the Tenancy Agreement, our tenants have a contractual responsibility for:
- 6.2 *'reducing damp, mould and condensation through ventilation and controlling moisture'*

6.3 As set out in section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, a housing tenant or leaseholder has a duty to “use the premises in a tenant-like manner”. In essence, this means that our tenants are expected to take good care of the dwelling, carry out daily maintenance tasks and not do anything that directly leads to a deterioration of the fabric of the building or the installations and facilities provided. For example, they should:

- Keep the dwelling clean
- Heat and ventilate the property appropriately – MDH will support and signpost tenants if there is financial hardship

6.4 Section 4 Defective Premises Act 1972 sets out that as a Landlord, Mid Devon Housing cannot be liable under s4 for injury or damage caused by something that the tenant is responsible for repairing.

6.5 Tenants have an obligation to allow access for inspections and repairs, in accordance with the tenancy agreement