



Managing Damp and Mould Policy

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1.0 Introduction

Harrogate Housing Association (HHA) is committed to providing our residents with good quality, safe and secure homes that contribute positively to their wellbeing. HHA wish to prevent, whenever possible, the adverse effects of damp and mould. To do this we adopt a zero tolerance approach to damp and mould in our properties. We work with residents to resolve any issues by taking prompt action, providing support and guidance to manage condensation and reducing the possibility of damp and mould occurring in their home.

The Housing Ombudsman recommended that all landlords take a proactive approach and not a reactive response to identifying and tackling the issue, identify cases at an early stage, take responsibility for dealing with issues and adopt a learning approach from managing the situation. The Association has already adopted a more proactive approach through its Strategy for Managing Damp and Mould 2023 with a 4 step approach of Identify, Remedy, Resolve and Prevent. In October 2025 Awaab's Law came into force. The law requires Registered Providers like HHA to investigate and address serious housing hazards, such as severe damp and mould, within strict timescales. It mandates faster, more consistent action with the aim of ensuring safer and healthier living conditions in social housing. This will mean that all emergency hazards and all damp and mould hazards that present a significant risk of harm to residents will be addressed within fixed periods.

This policy builds on the existing Strategy and reflects the new legislation on managing damp and mould.

2.0 Aims of the policy






HHA's aim is to provide homes that are well maintained and which are free of damp and mould that could risk the health and safety of our residents. The aim of the policy is to outline the Association's approach in managing damp and mould. The specific aims of the policy are: -

- Take reports of damp and mould seriously, making sure we meet all our responsibilities.
- To undertake effective investigations and implement practicable remediation solutions to manage damp and mould.
- Ensuring that the Association complies with all statutory and regulatory requirements including Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and Decent Home Standard.
- Proactively manage potential risks, promptly diagnose and prevent issues that may arise from damp and mould.
- Prioritise the most severe cases and ensure that the needs of the household are considered in our investigations, decision- making and action, including the most vulnerable residents.

- Work with residents to access guidance and support to manage and control condensation that can lead to mould in their home.
- Communicate clearly and openly with residents throughout the management of the process.

3.0 Understanding what the problem is.

Damp is the accumulation of moisture within a property, affecting the building structure like walls, floors, ceilings and foundations, as well as home furnishing such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture etc. As well as causing damage, damp can lead to the growth of mould. Below are factors that can lead to damp in homes:

1.  **Condensation** – Condensation damp occurs when moisture within the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the building(i.e. windows, corners of a wall) and is the most common form of damp and is the most preventable type of dampness. Condensation can result from several living conditions, including :
 - **Poor ventilation** – Not opening windows, blocking vents, not using extractor fans and restricting air circulation around furniture.
 - **Insufficient heating** – not heating the property adequately.
 - **High humidity** – activities like cooking without covering pans and drying laundry indoors.
 - **Cluttered spaces** – Lack of space around possessions and storage hindering airflow through the property.
2.  **Penetrating Damp** – Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.
3.  **Rising Damp** – Rising damp occurs when moisture from the ground travels upwards through building components in contact with the ground, such as walls, floors and a failed damp proof course. This problem is commonly found in older properties.
4.  **Water leaks-** Leaking water from waste and heating pipes, overflowing baths and sinks, burst pipes or defective water storage vessels inside the building.
5.  **Mould** – Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

It is important to recognise that not all damp and mould presents the same level of risk.

4.0 Categorising the Risk

Under Awaab's Law and our management of damp and mould we will prioritise cases by identifying the severity, location of the issue and the vulnerability of the household. The Association has 3 categories

- a) Emergency (response within 24 hours)
- b) Significant (response within 5 working days)
- c) Low (out of Awaab's law scope within 10 working days)

When the Association becomes aware of an issue with damp and mould we will respond by the deadlines laid out in Awaab's Law, see below.

Category	Examples	Action	Required Time frame
Emergency Hazard – “poses ‘an imminent and significant risk of harm’ to the health or safety of the tenant”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe Damp and Mould growth • Mould spores • Severe risk to household i.e. damp and mould that is affecting their ability to breathe <p>See Section 6 for what severe damp and mould looks like.</p>	<p>Carry out inspection</p> <p>Check household vulnerability</p> <p>Confirm action to be taken i.e. urgent mould clean</p>	<p>24 hours for inspection and safety works to be completed. Further works to start within 5 days</p>
Significant Hazard “risk of harm to the occupier’s health or safety that a reasonable person with the relevant knowledge would take steps to make safe as a matter of urgency”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penetrating Dampness • Less serious damp and mould present • A HHSRS issue identified. <p>See Section 6 for what severe damp and mould looks like such as penetrating dampness</p>	<p>Arrange inspection</p> <p>Confirm action required and timescales</p> <p>Check household vulnerability</p>	<p>5 working days for inspection and 5 days to make safe if significant hazard found.</p>
Low (Out of Awaab’s Law scope) No significant risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small mould spotting – areas of mould growth limited in coverage and location • Low levels of condensation 	<p>Arrange inspection</p> <p>Confirm repairs</p> <p>Advice and support provided</p>	<p>10 working days.</p> <p>Reasonable timescales to be delivered</p>

5.0 Action on Damp and Mould

- 5.1 The Association advises residents at sign up on the practical steps to take in the prevention of damp and mould in their home. This is backed up by providing a guidance leaflet so that residents can read further on preventative steps to take. Reminders are also sent on Facebook posts or given at property visits including Home Reviews.
- 5.2 When we become aware of an issue with damp and mould we will arrange for our Repairs Surveyor (or other suitably qualified person) to carry out an inspection. We aim through a series of screening questions (see Appendix 2) to triage a response to the issue; the timescales will depend on the urgency of the repair as set out above.

There will be different investigations :-

1. Emergency Hazard – within 24 hours – If HHA have reasonable grounds to believe that there is an emergency hazard affecting your home. If we identify any works these will be completed in the 24 hour period.
2. Significant Hazard – we aim to inspect your home within 5 working days and if works identified, to have started this work in a further 5 days (10 days in total) and in most cases as soon as reasonably practicable to determine what work is required to make the home safe and prevent the hazard from reoccurring.
3. Low (outside of Awaab's Law) – we aim to inspect within 10 working days

Following an Investigation by the Repairs Surveyor (or suitably qualified person) into points 1 or 2 above a written summary of the findings will be provided to the resident within 3 working days, this will include :-

1. Whether or not the investigation identified **an emergency or significant** hazard and what the hazard is.
2. If action is required, the summary will specify what the action is and a target time for beginning and completing that action.
3. If no action is required the summary will specify that there is no action required and the reasons why there is no action required.
4. Information on how to contact us.

For those Low (outside of Awaab's law) investigations HHA will keep residents informed as to what works will be carried out and timescales involved within 5 working days of the inspection. HHA will continue to communicate and keep residents updated.

As part of our commitment to resolving issues and keeping our residents updated HHA will:-

- Take all reasonable steps to keep the resident informed about the timing and progress of the required work until the work is completed, unless for any reason the work is no longer required.
- Check the resident's wellbeing and of all those in the household
- Provide the resident with details on how to report any issues following the completion of the work.
- Book in Home Review within a 12 month period as a further check. The date will take into account the time of year to ensure the issue has not reoccurred.
- Identify any additional support that HHA may be aware of that will assist the resident.
- Make all reasonable endeavours to work with residents around access to carry out work in their home. However should residents persistently fail to give access to their home to carry out work then enforcement via legal action through the courts will be taken and if appropriate recharge the cost of this action back to the resident.

- If a resident fails to consent to works being carried out in their home for the prevention of a hazard under Awaab's Law and after exhausting all reasonable endeavours to obtain consent for the works, without which it cannot lawfully be undertaken, take legal action to carry out the works and the costs recharged back to the resident.
- If after Inspection, the report concludes that a home is not affected by an emergency or significant hazard will notify the resident of this and advise what works will be undertaken to resolve the issue.

In Summary HHA aim to :-

- Investigate any potentially emergency hazards and complete safety work, both within 24 hours.
- Inspect potential significant hazards within 5 working days.
- Provide a written report to the resident within 3 working days from the conclusion of the inspection.
- Make your home safe if a significant hazard is confirmed within 5 working days.
 - Start any further works within 5 days or asap (10 days in total) :-
 - Aim to complete work in 12 weeks or within a reasonable period of time.
- Low Level (out of Awaab's Law and HHSRS) property to be inspected in 10 working days.

6.0 Examples of Severe Damp and Mould

6.1 The pictures below indicate what severe cases of damp and mould would look like. HHA always considers the circumstances of the household as part of the action we take.

Residents are encouraged to report all signs of damp and mould regardless of the severity.

6.2 Penetrating Damp— such as roof leaks or through walls due to faulty overflowing gutters or chimney leak



6.3 Rising damp – usually from a failed damp proof course



6.4 Severe Mould



7.0 Legislation and Policy

1. Awaab's Law 2025
2. Decent Homes Standard 2012
3. Housing Act 2004 (HHSRS)
4. Homes (fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
5. Environmental Protection Act 1990

The Association will also have reference to:

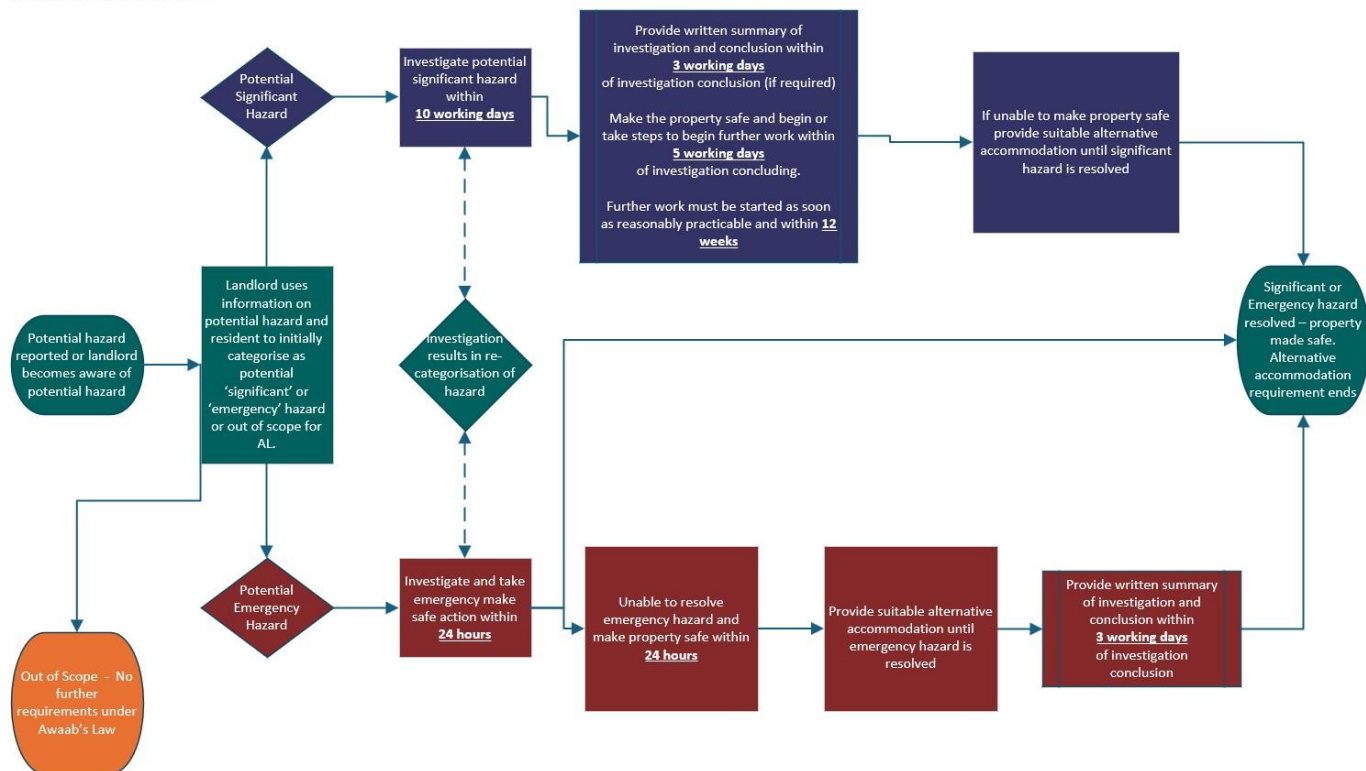
- The Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Complaints and Resident Feedback Policy
- National Federation Best Practice Guide

Appendix 1 Awaab's Law Timeframe

Source <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awaabs-law-draft-guidance-for-social-landlords/awaabs-law-draft-guidance-for-social-landlords>.

Diagram 1 – Awaab's Law Process Flow

Note : Does not include, renewed and further Investigation timeframes



Appendix 2 – Triage Template for Damp and Mould - Action will be triaged following the responses to below into the 3 strands of Emergency, Significant and Low for action.

Question	Resident Response	Officer action/ comments
1. Describe the issue		
2. When did you first notice the problem. Has there been any changes since then?		
3. What rooms are affected		
4. Where is the damp/mould located e.g. floors, ceilings inside or outside walls, furnishings, clothing, cupboards.		
5. What does it look like and size of area affected		
6. Have you tried to clean the mould – with what, how often		
7. What ventilation is there in the room, extractor fan, window? And do you use them?		
8. How many people are in the property? Any pets?		
9. Does anyone residing in the property have: - a) respiratory conditions (COPD, Asthma, Cystic fibrosis, Chronic Lung conditions) or b) Weakened Immune system, (pregnant women or new born, children). c) Children under 16yrs, house bound or mobility issues.		
10. Is there anyone in the property who has experienced any of the following in the last 6 months coughing, wheezing or throat infections or dry itchy skin, nasal issues, or has attended hospital for any of these or anyone in the household with mental health issues.		
11. Heating/ Extraction being used, is it on, how often.		
12. Can you send some images		

Assessment Level

Emergency in 24 Hrs

☐

Significant in 10 days

☐

Low in 14 days

☐

Appointment set for..... agreed with resident

SignedDate

Appendix 3 Technical Property Report – Property Details

Property Identification	Address			
Property Age Band	Pre-1920	1920-1945	1946-1979	Post 1979
Property Type	House/Bungalow		Flat/Dwelling	
Occupancy level				
Surveyor				
Date of Inspection				

Description of Dwelling	
List of all Deficiencies in the property	Hazards to which Deficiencies contribute
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Include photographs, a plan, other details such as an EPC, etc.

Place in the **Main Deficiencies** section, or subsequent **Deficiencies** sections relevant to each of the hazards, to illustrate what has been seen.

Hazard Scoring: (Repeat per hazard)

Property Identification				
Property Age Band	Pre-1920	1920-1945	1946-1979	Post 1979
Property Type	House/Terraced/Bungalow		Flat/Dwelling	
Surveyor				
Date of Inspection				

Hazard Title & No	
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Deficiencies / findings relevant to the hazard

Likelihood	National Average = in
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5600	3200	1800	1000	560	320	180	100	56	32	18	10	6	3	2	1
<4200	2400	1300	750	420	240	130	75	42	24	13	7.5	4	2.5	1.5	>

Justification

Outcomes	National Averages =	CI	CII	CIII	CIV
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Class I	0	0.1	0.2	0.5	1	2.2	4.6	10	21.5	31.6	46.4
Class II	0	0.1	0.2	0.5	1	2.2	4.6	10	21.5	31.6	46.4
Class III	0	0.1	0.2	0.5	1	2.2	4.6	10	21.5	31.6	46.4
	<0.05	0.15	0.3	0.7	1.5	3	7	15	26	38	>

Class IV (i.e. 100 – (CI+CII+CIII))	
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Justification

Calculation

Rating Score:	Hazard Band:
Date	

Appendix 4 Summary Report Template for Emergency and Significant Hazard

Investigation into Report of Damp and Mould

1. Investigation Details

Investigated By.....Address.....

How Reported..... Date of Investigation.....

2. Household Details/ Medical conditions

Resident/s.....JointAge.....Age.....

Vulnerabilities identified (Respiratory or Cardiovascular etc. Coughs, Pregnant woman newborn or mental health issues)

.....
.....

Household

1..... age.....

2.....age.....

3.....age.....

4.....age.....

Vulnerabilities Identified/Medical Conditions (Respiratory or Cardiovascular etc. Coughs, Pregnant woman newborn or mental health issues)

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

3. Hazard

Has a hazard under Awaab's Law been found Emergency/Significant. Y/N.

What evidence of risk.....

Significant Risk Found to the Health and Safety of resident/household ...Y/N

What is the risk?

If NO, is any action to be takenBy when.....

If No action required what is the reason.....

4. Repair Plan and Timescales

What Immediate/Temporary repairs required?

.....
..... Timescale

What permanent repairs required?.....

1.....
..... Image ref.....

2.....
..... Image ref.....

3.....
..... Image ref.....

4.....
..... Image ref.....

Timescales

1.....2.....

3.....4.....

**Note here if a further sheet is required and attached to report Y/N*

Further Investigations Y/N if yes: -

When these will take place

Images taken and log ref.

Sent to Resident/s date by (email/hand delivered/post)

Signed Date.....

Access agreed with resident

Contact Harrogate Housing Association on Tel: 01423 884018 or email info@hhal.org.uk
or via website www.hhal.org.uk