

Damp and Condensation Policy

Version:	Version 2
Lead Directorate:	Homes and Neighbourhoods
EIA completed:	10 October 2022
Approved by:	Customer Focus Committee 4 November 2022



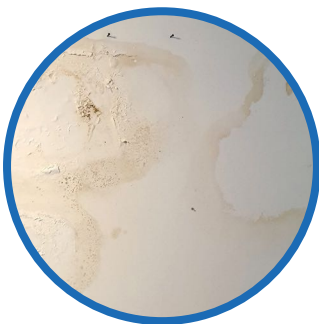


1. Introduction

Damp, mould, and condensation can arise in any home. We recognise that some homes may from time to time suffer with condensation or damp.

When damp and condensation occur, this can lead to mould growth and the potential for there to be a health impact. We have established a proactive policy and framework, detailing our approach to diagnosis and to give residents clarity about how we intend to address these issues, where they arise.

There are several causes of damp. There are four main causes and this is what we mean when we use these terms:



External Penetrating Damp

This is where water leaks through walls either through saturated brickwork, or through gaps in the structure. Examples include roof leaks, leaking guttering/ rainwater downpipe leaking, chimney/window flashing/tray failing.

Rising Damp

This is where there is capillary movement of moisture from the ground into the walls of buildings. It may result in structural damage up to a level of three feet or 1 metre. This may be caused by damp proof course failure/ bridging which leaves a 'tide mark' staining on walls.



Internal leak

This is caused by internal services and water pipes leaking which may be associated with heating or hot/cold water supply. This could be leaks from kitchen/bathroom wastes, radiator valves or control, and joints to pipework.

Condensation / mould growth

By this we mean moisture that forms on surfaces when water vapour meets a cold surface. This can be visible when condensation occurs on cold windows but can also be unseen on cold walls. It is usually caused by a build-up of moisture in a home and can lead to mould growth.





2. Objectives – aim of our policy

This policy is to set out a clear framework for Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) to respond to reports of damp and condensation in PCH residential rented tenants' homes.

PCH acknowledges that it has responsibilities contained in the tenancy agreement and legislation. These include maintaining the exterior in good repair such as drains, gutters, external pipes, and roofs and installations for the supply of water and sanitation and keeping heating systems in good repair and working order.

Tenants also have responsibilities in the tenancy agreement to look after their home and our approach is to work in partnership with tenants to be able to provide and maintain dry, energy efficient homes.

PCH has a clear process for reporting damp and condensation to be assessed and responded to by PCH.

We will ensure that PCH tenants are supported and have the information they need to prevent and actively manage condensation in their homes.

For the purposes of this policy, the words 'Damp' and 'Condensation' covers problems where issues with the conditions in the home are caused by a variety of problems including disrepair.

This policy relates to PCH residential rented tenants' homes.

For residential leaseholders and shared owners, the responsibility will be determined by the nature of the lease or agreement that relates to their home.

In general, this will mean that for leaseholders and shared owners they will be responsible for the internal condition of their home, and PCH for the external and structural part of the home.



3. Policy Statement

PCH will: -



Take a zero-tolerance approach to damp, condensation, and mould. By this we mean that PCH will act and respond to all reports of damp and seek remedies and solutions to tackle the causes.



Ensure that staff understand the causes and possible remedies of damp, condensation and mould through an effective training and awareness programme.



Respond promptly to all reports of damp and condensation and aim to arrange a survey of homes to be undertaken within one week of receiving a report of damp.



Understand our housing stock and the types of properties that are likely to suffer from damp and mould.



Implement effective asset management programmes that improve the thermal comfort of our homes to help reduce the likelihood of damp condensation and mould. This aligns to the PCH Asset Strategy to ensure PCH homes meet the required standards and contribute to the decarbonisation of the housing stock.



Provide information and advice to residents that helps them prevent damp and manage condensation in their homes. We will provide a Damp, mould, and condensation leaflet along with animated videos to support tenants. Where tenants approach us if struggling to afford to heat their homes, PCH will help with a benefit/income check and advise on how to make a claim where possible.



Be proactive in investing in preventative services by adopting a risk-based approach in responding to reports of damp and condensation. By this we mean to anticipate and prioritise interventions based on what our data about reports of damp tells us.

4. Responsibilities

PCH are responsible for making sure that the homes are fit to live in and are maintained in accordance with the tenancy agreement and any relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

We will investigate and diagnose causes of damp and condensation and advise the tenant of what we find and how the issue will be addressed. We may use specialist help if required.

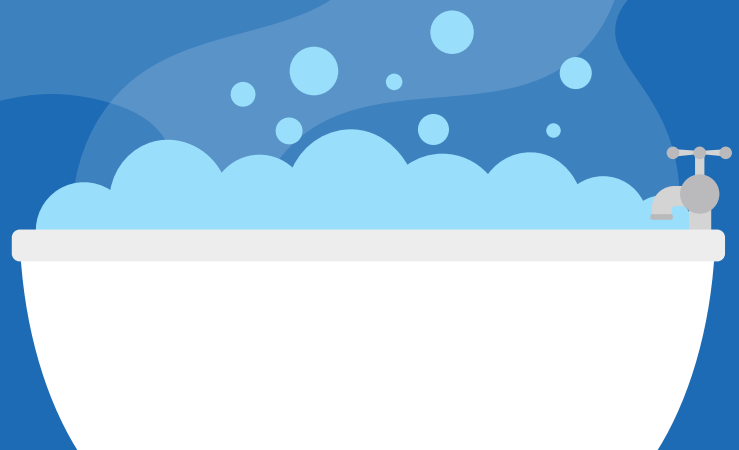
We expect tenants/residents to keep their home in a good condition in accordance with their tenancy and let us know when there is a problem so that we can respond with appropriate help, advice, and remedial works.

We expect tenants to do all they can by following the advice, information, and guidance that is provided to minimise damp and condensation.

This policy includes communal parts to PCH residential properties such as stairwell in blocks of flats, as well as inside residential rented tenants' homes.

We will ensure that this approach is reflected in the PCH Repair Policy and meets the requirements of the PCH Letting Standard for empty (void) homes before they are let.

We will work proactively to identify similar properties or property types that experience damp and investigate taking measures to prevent using a data driven approach including the use of stock condition surveys.



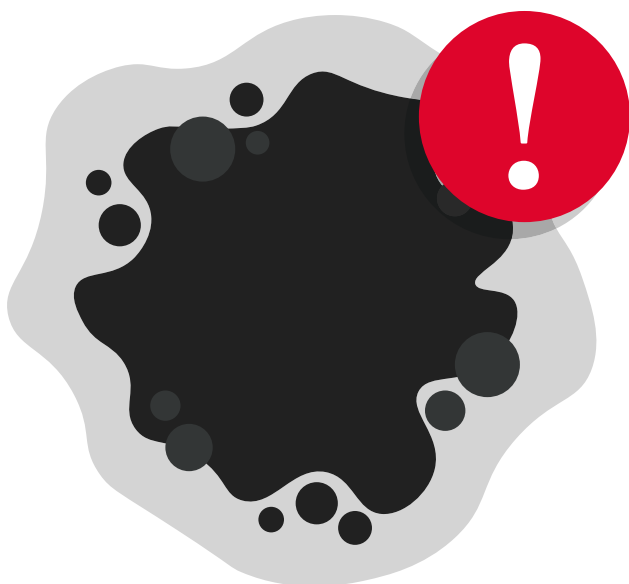
5. Remedies

PCH will use a range of appropriate solutions when responding to reports of damp.

This will be dependent on the nature of the damp issues and will include considering the construction of the property, the existing ventilation, and the type of heating. Details of what tenants can expect will be provided in the advice/information additional to this policy.

Different remedies will be used where it is reasonable and practicable to do so.

PCH will ensure that there are processes in place to receive, record and effectively respond to reports of damp, condensation and mould ensuring, that tenants are kept informed of action that is being considered and undertaken.



6. Legislation

PCH comply with all relevant legislation and regulations.

7. Data Protection

In applying this policy, all members of staff must comply with PCH's Data Protection Policy and ensure that the personal information supplied by customers is always protected.

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

PCH will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.

PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats on request.

PCH will carry out an equality impact assessment on this policy, in line with our corporate procedure.

9. Monitoring and Review

We will monitor this policy to ensure it meets good practice and current legislation and will review it in accordance with our review timetable for all policies.



Damp and Condensation Policy

Version:	Version 2
Lead Directorate:	Homes and Neighbourhoods
EIA completed:	10 October 2022
Approved by:	Customer Focus Committee 4 November 2022



Plumer House, Tailyour Road, Crownhill, Plymouth PL6 5DH
info@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk | www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk

CARE. RESPECT. LISTEN. DO THE RIGHT THING.