

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Council Housing

Damp and Mould Policy

Issue date: October 2025
Review date: October 2028



Cheshire West
and Chester

1. Management Information

Approval Date:	October 2025
Next Review Date:	October 2028
Policy Owner:	Janet Lawton, Head of Housing Delivery
Responsible Service Area:	Council Housing Management Service
Responsible Director:	Director of Economy and Housing

2. Introduction

This policy applies to all Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) Council homes, communal areas, including where properties are identified for future disposal or are within an area marked for regeneration.

Cheshire West and Cheshire Council adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould. All reported cases of damp and mould will be inspected and addressed.

When diagnosing damp and mould full responsibility will be accepted for resolving the underlying issues, as realistically as possible- considering the property involved. There is no differentiation between property category, type and geographical area when dealing with damp and mould issues.

This policy reflects the statutory requirements introduced by Awaab's Law that came into force 27 October 2025. It sets out the required timeframes for investigation and remediation of emergency hazards and significant damp and mould hazards in social homes.

3. Aim of Policy

This policy sets out our approach to prevent and remedy damp and mould. The implementation of this policy will ensure the delivery of an effective and efficient damp and mould prevention and remedy service. It also responds to:

- The Housing Act 2004
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Awaabs Law 2025
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023

4. Strategic context

This policy helps the Council to meet the following national and local strategic aims.

Social Housing Regulations Act 2023 – Consumer Standard

- Quality and Safety Standard
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

[CWAC Borough Plan 2024 – 2028](#) - sets out how the Council will work with all its residents to build a stronger future where the Council and residents all play their part in creating thriving, caring and sustainable communities.

The Borough Plan has six missions as follows:

- Starting well - The best start for the borough`s children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.
- Tackling hardship and poverty - More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.
- Resilient people living their best lives - Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.
- Opportunity in a fair local economy - Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy.
- Neighbourhood pride - Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.
- Greener communities - Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

[Together with Tenants Charter | Cheshire West and Chester Council Council-housing-asset-management-strategy-final Tenant Engagement Strategy 2025-30](#)

5. Definition and legislation

Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property and can occur in homes for a variety of reasons. It affects building materials (such as walls, floors, ceilings, foundations) and/or home furnishings and belongings (such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture and clothing). In addition to causing damage, damp can also lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms.

Landlords are legally responsible for addressing damp and mould and should work with qualified professionals.

This policy reflects the statutory response and repair timescales set out in Awaab's Law (2025).

The different types of damp:

Condensation damp - Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

Penetrating damp - Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows or floors.

Rising damp - Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises up through parts of the buildings in contact with the ground (walls and floors); it is usually found in older properties and is often misdiagnosed. It can be identified through visual inspection; however chemical testing is the most appropriate way of confirming it. Often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.

Traumatic damp - 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 building. Traumatic damp can also originate from outside the property, for example from another building or from environmental flooding.

Mould - Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

The Council will not attribute damp and mould to lifestyle and fail to act, everyday moisture-creating activities are not a reason to refuse investigation or remediation. Awaab's Law applies where hazards arise from a deficiency in the dwelling or building/land for which the landlord is responsible

6. How the policy will be delivered

This Policy will be available to all staff through the intranet and regular training will be provided to relevant employees on all policies and procedures.

If staff become aware that there are problems with effective operation of the policy or the associated procedures, they should report this to the policy owner. This feedback will be incorporated into the policy / procedural review process

This policy will be reviewed annually or upon legislative change to ensure continued compliance with Awaab's Law and subsequent regulations.

Reporting damp, mould or condensation issues

Damp reports can be made directly from tenants, leaseholders or others acting on their behalf. They can also be identified by staff and contractors when they visit a tenant's home, communal area or vacant property (void) having works to relet them.

All reports of damp and mould will be logged and actioned in line with the timescales required by Awaab's Law.

We want the reporting of issues to be easily accessible and simple to follow. There are several ways to report issues which includes:

Website: **INCLUDE LINK TO NEW REPORT A REPAIR**

By writing: Cheshire West and Chester Council, Council Landlord Service, The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BZ.

Phone: 0300 123 8123

In person: The Portal, Wellington Road, Ellesmere Port On Tuesdays between 9.30am and 5pm or Thursday between 1pm and 5pm.

Operating Hours

We are open Monday – Friday between the hours of 8.00am – 6.30pm (except bank holidays). Outside of office hours always call **INSERT NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER** to be connected to the out of hours service.

At the point of reporting, standard questions are asked to ensure an accurate and consistent approach to diagnosing the cause and extent of damp and mould.

Appointments

If access is required to a tenant's home, a choice of time slots will be offered, which includes:

- Morning or afternoon
- All-day
- Appointments that avoid the school run
- Emergency repairs are not arranged, and we aim to attend in 24 hours of the reported emergency

If these times are not convenient, we can arrange a time that works best for the tenant.

No Access

Where access to the home is not provided, we will try to contact the tenant on the number provided. If contact cannot be made, a no access calling card will be left at the property. The card will indicate the reason for the call and a contact number to make a new appointment.

Any inspections or remedial work will remain open to allow time for contact to be made by the tenant and the rebooking of the appointment. We will also make reasonable endeavours to gain access to carry out required inspections and/or works.

Response to reports of damp, mould or condensation

- The Council have service standards for the inspection and resolution of damp and mould which will be published on the website.
- Staff will investigate any potential emergency hazards and, should the investigation confirm any emergency hazards, the Council will arrange to undertake any relevant safety work as soon as reasonably practicable. Staff will ensure that the investigation and any work arising from the same will take place within 24 hours of becoming aware of the hazard
- An inspection will be booked in within 10 working days, and this will be undertaken by a trained member of staff.

- The Council will produce a written summary of investigation findings - for all standard, emergency or renewed works and provide this to the tenant and leaseholder within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.
- The Council will complete relevant safety works and take steps to begin any further supplementary works to prevent the hazard from reoccurring within 5 working days of concluding the investigation all works must begin within 12 weeks.
- Staff will keep tenants and leaseholders updated at each stage and provide information on how to stay safe
- Staff will keep accurate records of reports, investigations, decisions and works to evidence compliance
- Following the inspection, there are several remedial actions that will be taken to alleviate any issues:
 - Advice and support to remedy the issues
 - Minor repairs to be raised, such as repairing extractor fans.
 - Major works to be raised, such as damp-proof courses
- The Council are committed to addressing minor related issues to damp and mould in a timely manner. All damp work will be completed within 12 weeks.

The completion of additional works, including, but not limited to, the replacement of windows and doors and the installation of guttering, is subject to the availability and procurement of the necessary materials and components.

Supporting Tenants and Leaseholders

- We will ensure that tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and empathy.
- We will ensure that we clearly and regularly update them with advice or any actions that will be undertaken to remedy the issues.
- The Council will provide the tenant with a copy of the damp and mould report within 3 working days of the conclusion of the investigation which will detail the necessary works to be completed and the approximate timeframe.
- As part of the damp and mould inspection in homes, we will undertake a health and vulnerability assessment for the household. This will determine if any additional support is required to facilitate the works and enable the works to be prioritised accordingly. For example: supporting a tenant if they need to vacate their home while work is being completed.
- In certain exceptional cases this may include a temporary decant or being permanently rehoused. The tenant will be supported through this process to ensure all associated costs are fully covered.

Quality inspection and follow-up visits

We will review the effectiveness of the damp and mould service by contacting the tenant or leaseholder four weeks after the works are completed to verify that the completed works have addressed the reported problem.

If the damp and mould issues have not been resolved, we will arrange with the tenant or leaseholder a further inspection to identify reasons for the reoccurrence of the issue(s). We aim to undertake these inspections within 14 working days. This aligns with the statutory requirements set out in Awaab's Law (2025)

Our Role and Responsibilities

In line with legislation, works will commence to address issues with damp and mould in the following timescales (applicable at the time of writing and to be reviewed if legislation changes):

- Damp to be surveyed within 10 working days of report with a written summary provided to the tenant within 3 working days of the conclusion of the inspection.
- Urgent reports of damp to be actioned within 5 working days of the report
- Any emergency repairs that pose immediate risks to be actioned within 24 hours in accordance with Awaab's Law, where not possible, suitable alternative accommodation will be provided.
- When a damp and mould inspection identify issues that could potentially be a health risk, a mould clean will be undertaken within 5 working days in advance of the remedial works to remove the potential risks.
- Qualified staff will be employed to accurately inspect, diagnose and specify remedial works for damp and mould, in a none blaming manner and in accordance with the time frames of Awaab's Law.
- Suitable budgets will be identified to deal with reported damp and mould issues effectively and in a timely manner.
- We will adopt a collaborative approach, working with the tenant or leaseholder to remedy the issues.
- Frontline staff will be trained to identify signs of damp and mould, supporting them to be more proactive in identifying potential issues.
- Staff will also be trained to provide a customer focused approach to dealing with damp and mould reports. This includes listening to tenants and leaseholders to understand their concerns, particularly regarding the impact of the damp and mould on the household.
- All empty homes will have a full visual technical inspection at survey stage and should issues of potential damp and mould be identified, then a full damp inspection will be undertaken.

Tenant and Leaseholder Responsibilities

- Frequently check for damp and mould and immediately report any issues. This includes any signs of rising or penetrating damp.
- Report any necessary repairs that will affect the control of damp and condensation (for example faulty extractor fan, inability to open windows, lack of heating, roof leaks etc.)
- Keep to agreed appointment times and allow access for inspections and to carry out remedial works to address any damp and mould issues.

- Keep the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., cover pans when cooking, drying laundry outside (where possible), where it is safe to do so, keep the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- Adequately heat rooms – ideally at 18°C.
- Keep the house well-ventilated e.g., open windows during cooking / bathing, turn on and ensure that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allowing air to circulate around furniture.
- Follow all advice and guidance in respect of managing and controlling the return of damp and condensation.
- Arrange adequate household contents insurance for the home.

To keep condensation to a minimum and reduce the risk of dampness and mould growth, information can be obtained through the Council website [damp-and-mould-advice-leaflet](#)

Planned Preventative Capital Investment Work

The Council Asset Management Strategy aims to address emerging challenges particularly around future investment requirements, most notably decarbonisation, energy efficiency and thermal insulation standards.

The strategy also considers changes in social housing regulatory requirements and other legislative changes and requirements and considers financial circumstances and overall financial capacity of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The Council has and will continue to ensure that the necessary level of investment is spent on our housing stock to keep it in a state of good repair, safe and compliant.

An essential element in combating damp and mould is to renew building components and elements such as roofs, windows, doors, kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and the like when they become obsolete and/or they are at the end of their serviceable life and/or before they fail and beyond economic repair.

The specifications for capital works will be regularly reviewed to ensure that a holistic approach to maintaining social housing properties is achieved and future proofing the stock from damp and mould.

The Council is committed to ensuring that contracts will be in place to deliver the capital works as well as contracts for servicing and general maintenance.

The Council will use insight from stock condition data, including geographical areas, property type, age, and energy efficiency (SAP) rating; and business intelligence, built up from insight from previously reported and completed damp and condensation responsive repairs.

This programme supports compliance with Awaab's Law (2025) and future legislative changes in 2026 and 2027.

Complaints

If a tenant or leaseholder is not satisfied by the way in which the repair has been dealt with, or in the way in which the work has been carried out, a formal complaint may be raised in line with our Complaints policy.

7. Equality and reasonable adjustment statement

We value diversity and work to create an inclusive environment for customers and staff, where everyone has access to the same opportunities. We welcome our responsibility to comply with equalities legislation and regulatory requirements that relate to equity, diversity and inclusion and aim to do more. Through our activities we aim to remove systemic barriers to equal opportunities and eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation within our organisation.

We are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. As such, we will endeavour to understand and make any reasonable adjustments required for customers in line with our Reasonable Adjustment Statement and the Equality Act 2010. Any reasonable adjustment provided will be recorded and kept under active review.

8. Related Documents

Responsive Repairs Policy (Inc Right to Repair)
Voids and Lettings Policy

9. Equality Analysis

Results of EA / Actions taken forward to mitigate any potential negative impacts	Inform that this policy can be provided in alternative formats. Inform about the ongoing equality and diversity training for staff in the delivery of this policy.
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See appendix 1 for full Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.

10. Consultation and Business Intelligence

The policy was created in consultation with the Council's tenants, leaseholders and staff.

11. Monitoring and review

The Council Housing Management Board has responsibility for the monitoring and review of this policy. This policy will be reviewed every three years starting from the date it is approached and adopted.

The Council's Executive Cabinet has ultimate responsibility for the safety across all owned, leased and managed properties, and will:

- Resource and allocate appropriately qualified and suitably experienced persons to assist the implementation of this policy and in discharging our duty for safety.
- Ensure that an effective Damp and Mould Policy is in place, and responsibilities have been delegated to other Directors to support the implementation of this policy

The Council Housing Management Board has strategic oversight for the management of fire safety and ensuring compliance is achieved and maintained.

The Council will have a suite of key performance indicators that will monitor and provide reassurance to tenants and leaseholders. These indicators will be regularly reviewed by the Council Housing Management Board.

Staff will have a responsibility to ensure that all cases of damp and mould are dealt with in accordance with this policy, as well as any separate and applicable service standards.

As part of the Councils monitoring processes, we will maintain accurate records of damp and mould reports, including of the remedial works carried out and any correspondence.

This policy will be reviewed every two years starting from the date it is approached and adopted.

12. Approval and Review History

The approval route for all policies and procedures is via the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning who has delegated powers for policy approval from the Council's Executive Cabinet.

Version	Approved by	Date
Approval V1.2	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning	02/07/2024
Approval V1.3	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning	17/09/2025
Approval V1.4	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning	05/07/2025
Approval V1.5	Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning	17/09/2025

13. Document Revision History

Date amended	Version	Key Changes
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03/04/2025	V1	New policy
05/05/2025	V1.2	<p>Revised version following tenants from the CHMB feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reword the Aim of the Policy • Include definitions of damp and mould • Inform on how tenants and leaseholders can report damp, mould or condition issues • Inform on what happens when operatives are unable to access a home • Be clearer on the response to reports of damp, mould or condensation • Provide more detail on the support tenants and leaseholders can receive • Provide more detail on the support tenants and leaseholders can receive • Provide more detail quality inspection and follow-up visits • Inform on roles and responsibilities • Provide more detail on preventative work • Inform on monitoring and review of policy <p>Inform on Complaint Policy</p>
17/6/2025	V1.3	<p>Revised version following wider tenant and leaseholder consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review 'What is damp and mould?' section to ensure that it is clear and in plain English • Review a paragraph in 'Response to reports of damp, mould or condensation' section to ensure that is it clear and in plain English • Reorder in importance the 'Our roles and responsibilities section' <p>In the 'Supporting tenants and leaseholders' section' give an example of additional support provided</p>
26/06/2025	V1.4	Revision to include specific response timeframes as per announcement from the Deputy Prime Minister -
17/09/2025	V1.5	Revised version to take into account the insourcing of the housing management service from ForHousing.
24/10/2025	V1.6	Revised version to include updates for Awaab's Law 2025.

Appendix 1 – Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Area of activity or change	Damp and Mould Policy
IMDF Approval	Allan Batty, Senior Housing Policy Officer

STAGE ONE - SCOPING	Outlines the decision that is being made any why
STAGE TWO - RESEARCH	Outlines the collaboration and research that will inform this decision
STAGE THREE - FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS	Considers how learnings from research and engagement are being embedded, the potential impact of the decision on different people and how these can best be managed.

STAGE ONE – SCOPING	
Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where has the proposed activity or change come from and why is it needed? Why is it important to the Council? How will this affect the tenant / customer journey or colleague experience? 	What activity or change is being proposed and why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review policy to meet the requirements of the Council and its tenants and leaseholders Review policy to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements Consult with tenants and leaseholders
	What benefits are you trying to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy to be clear about the approach being undertaken to prevent and remedy damp and mould within tenants' and leaseholders homes as well as communal areas. Policy to be informative, to be clear and in plain English. Meet the needs of tenants and leaseholders. Meet the requirements of Awaab`s Law.
STAGE TWO – RESEARCH	
Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What groups or individuals will you approach to discuss this? How will you ensure that these people are diverse and representative? (See Equity and Diversity table in stage three) Is there any data you can look at to support you? 	Who will help develop your thinking so that different experiences and perspectives are included? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with tenants and leaseholders using various methods to ensure a diverse range of residents have an opportunity to feedback. Undertake an equality impact assessment to identify any positive and/or negative impacts on characteristics.
	What research will you do to inform your understanding? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all relevant requirements, including any good practice and new legislation

STAGE THREE – FINDINGS AND NEXT STEPS	
Consider points such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have people told you are some of the key issues? • What good practice is happening in other organisations? • What changes are you planning to make because of the things you've found out? 	What have you learnt from your research and engagement? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with tenants, leaseholders informed on minor changes to the policy which is recorded in the final document.
	How will you embed what you've learnt into your activity or change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make relevant minor changes to the policy • Inform within the document that this can be provided in alternative formats. • Inform about the ongoing equality and diversity training being provided to staff in the delivery of this policy.

Equity and Diversity - Not everyone has the same access to opportunities or services, and the things that make us different – such as the characteristics listed below – can affect our experiences and outcomes. Therefore, it is important to consider how different people could be impacted by any activity or change we want to bring about.	
How could the proposed activity or change affect people with these characteristics (positively or negatively)?	
Age (Younger or older people)	
Caring responsibilities (Parents and those looking after an older or disabled person)	Both
Digital inclusion (People without access to digital platforms or devices)	
Educational attainment (People who have experienced barriers to formal education)	
Ethnicity, race and nationality (Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers)	
Financial inclusion (People experiencing financial barriers or challenges)	
Marriage / civil partnership (Legal union between different-sex or same-sex couples)	
Mental health (People with a mental disability or ill-health)	Both
Neurodiversity (Such as people with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia)	Both
Physical health (People with a physical disability or ill-health)	Both
Pregnancy and maternity (Someone who is pregnant or has recently given birth)	
Religion, faith or belief (All religions and faiths, including people with no religion)	
Sex (Men and women)	
Gender identity (Including trans and non-binary people)	
Sexual orientation (Such as Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual people)	
Any other characteristic	

Managing positive and negative effects

<p>Consider points such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you need to escalate any issues or seek legal advice? • Can you see any opportunities to promote or celebrate positive outcomes? • How will you build monitoring into the implementation of your activity or change and who will you report to? 	<p>If potential negative effects have been identified, how will any harm be reduced or avoided?</p>				
	<p>Identified Characteristics</p>	<p>Reduce or avoid potential negative effects</p>			
		<p>Supporting Tenants and Leaseholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure that tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and empathy. • We will ensure that we clearly and regularly update them with advice or any actions that will be undertaken to remedy the issues. • A copy of the damp and mould report will be provided which will detail the necessary works to be completed and the approximate timeframe. • As part of the damp and mould inspection in homes, we will undertake a health and vulnerability assessment for the household. This will determine if any additional support is required to facilitate the works and enable the works to be prioritised accordingly. • In certain exceptional cases this may include a temporary decant or being permanently rehoused. The tenant will be supported through this process to ensure all associated costs are fully covered. 	<p>Our Role and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will adopt a collaborative approach, working with the tenant or leaseholder to remedy the issues. • Staff will also be trained to provide a customer focused approach to dealing with damp and mould reports. This includes listening to tenants and leaseholders to understand their concerns, particularly regarding the impact of the damp and mould on the household. 	<p>Our Role and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a damp and mould inspection identify issues that could potentially be a health risk, a mould clean will be undertaken in advance of the remedial works to remove the potential risks. 	
		Caring responsibilities	a	a	
		Mental health	a	a	
Neurodiversity	a	a			
Physical health	a	a	a		

If potential positive effects have been identified, how can we ensure these are realised?

Identified Characteristics	Realise positive effects		
	Supporting Tenants and Leaseholders	Our Role and Responsibilities	Our Role and Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will ensure that tenants and leaseholders are treated with respect and empathy. We will ensure that we clearly and regularly update them with advice or any actions that will be undertaken to remedy the issues. A copy of the damp and mould report will be provided which will detail the necessary works to be completed and the approximate timeframe. As part of the damp and mould inspection in homes, we will undertake a health and vulnerability assessment for the household. This will determine if any additional support is required to facilitate the works and enable the works to be prioritised accordingly. <p>In certain exceptional cases this may include a temporary decant or being permanently rehoused. The tenant will be supported through this process to ensure all associated costs are fully covered.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will adopt a collaborative approach, working with the tenant or leaseholder to remedy the issues. Staff will also be trained to provide a customer focused approach to dealing with damp and mould reports. This includes listening to tenants and leaseholders to understand their concerns, particularly regarding the impact of the damp and mould on the household. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a damp and mould inspection identify issues that could potentially be a health risk, a mould clean will be undertaken in advance of the remedial works to remove the potential risks.
Caring responsibilities	a	a	
Mental health	a	a	
Neurodiversity	a	a	
Physical health	a	a	a

	How and when will the impacts of your activity or change be monitored moving forward?
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- The policy will be available to tenants on the website and all staff through the intranet.
- The implementation and management of this policy will be carried out by the Repairs Team (HMC).
- If staff become aware that there are problems with effective operation of the policy or the associated procedures, they should report this to the policy owner. This feedback will be incorporated into the policy / procedural review process.