



WCHG Damp and Mould Policy

Date of approval	26th January 2026
Responsible director	Paul Butterworth - Executive Director of Assets
Policy monitoring body	Customer Experience Committee & Dev. & Homes Committee
Resident input into policy date	Data led research to assess scale and propensity of cases, and sector benchmarking, see stock triangulation report Sep 2025.
Date for policy review	January 2029
Linked strategies/policies	Asset Management Strategy Repairs and Maintenance Policy Empty Homes Policy
Statutory and Legal Framework	This policy takes account of all legislative and regulatory requirements relevant to Registered Providers. Particular attention has been paid to Social Housing Act 2023, The Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, Ombudsman publications, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and Awaab's Law.
Version/date	Final V5 – January 2026

WCHG Damp and Mould Policy

1. Background

- 1.1. We understand that the presence of damp and mould can seriously impact the health and wellbeing of customers. This policy outlines the zero-tolerance approach that Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) take to damp and mould.
- 1.2. We want to ensure that customers live in homes that are free from hazards. We will use data about our properties, data about our customers that will help inform identification of damp and mould issues. Alongside customer identification, we want to deliver prompt remedial action & treatments, enabling us to provide homes that are safe for our customers.
- 1.3. This policy supports the delivery of the WCHG Corporate plan and the Great Place strategic theme. It also aligns to our Customer First programme, and our commitment to focus on supporting customers.

2. Legislation, Guidance, Regulatory Standards and Sanctions

- 2.1. **Legislation** – The principal legislation applicable to this policy is:
 - Social Housing (Regulations) Act 2023.
 - Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act) 2018.Additional legal duties that apply are listed in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. **Guidance** – We will comply with the non-statutory guidance relating to the Hazards in Social Housing (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2025, commonly referred to as Awaab's Law.
- 2.3. **Regulatory Standards** - We will comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework and consumer standards for social housing in England. The Safety and Quality Standard is the primary one applicable to this policy.
- 2.4. **Sanctions** – Failure to comply with the obligations and requirements set out in the above legislation, guidance and regulatory standards could result in the following:
 - An investigation by the Housing Ombudsman and a potential maladministration determination.
 - A Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Conditions Claim.
 - Legal action through the Courts for breach of contract with potential awards of damages if case is upheld.
 - Regulatory action in response to a breach of the Consumer Standards.

3. Risk Management

- 3.1. The WCHG Board annually review the Corporate Risk Register and agree the risk appetite for each one.

- 3.2. The WCHG Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for overseeing the management of corporate risks associated with this policy.
- 3.3. The Health and Safety Committee are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy that is designed to mitigate the risks associated with damp & mould safety.
- 3.4. The Head of Repairs is responsible for the day-to-day management and mitigation of risk.
- 3.5. The specific risks associated with this policy are:

SR2 - Death, Serious Injury or Harm: Fail to ensure we effectively protect our customers, WCHG colleagues and visitors. Board Appetite – **Averse**

SR3 - Regulatory Standards, laws, legislation and compliance: Non-compliance with regulatory standards, laws and legislation. Board Appetite – **Averse**

SR8 - Asset quality, repairs and building safety: Failure to effectively manage asset quality and building safety. Board Appetite - **Averse** (but open to innovation)

- 3.6. The risk appetite set by the Board is 'Averse', defined as 'Avoidance of risk wherever possible; preference for safe, compliant, and controlled approaches. The key focus of the Board is that regulatory compliance continues to be achieved, and the Regulator of Social Housing's Standards and Consumer Standards are met.
- 3.7. We will maintain a suite of procedures and processes, and provide adequate resources to implement them, to mitigate the risk of service delivery failing to adhere to this policy.

4. Scope

- 4.1. The service provided under this policy is available for customers who rent their home under a tenancy agreement, or occupy under licence. For leasehold customers we will meet all responsibilities set out in the lease.
- 4.2. All communal areas are also covered by this policy.
- 4.3. The provision of advice and guidance about damp and mould is included within the scope of this policy.
- 4.4. To fall under the scope of Awaab's Law a hazard must:
 - Be part of buildings or land for which the social landlord is responsible.
 - Result from defects, disrepair or lack of maintenance.
 - Be in the landlord's control to fix.
 - Not be damage that is a result of breach of contract by the tenant.
 - Be a significant or emergency hazard.

5. Zero Tolerance Approach to Damp and Mould

- 5.1. We recognise the distress customers experience when damp and mould is present in their home. We will treat customers who report these issues to us with empathy and respect, and will not prejudge the cause or reason for damp and mould problems.
- 5.2. We will work in partnership with customers to understand, reduce and resolve damp and mould issues in their home.
- 5.3. We will communicate clearly and effectively, about the action we will take, and any actions we advise customers can take to tackle damp and mould.
- 5.4. We will train all colleagues who visit customers at homes or handle enquiries, to engage customers and identify the range of potential causes of, and solutions to damp and mould issues, so that they can support customers and report/resolve issues promptly.
- 5.5. We will take responsibility for inspecting and diagnosing the cause of damp and mould in a customer's home, within 10 working days of it being reported to us by any party.
- 5.6. When we suspect the home is affected by an emergency damp and mould hazard we will inspect and diagnoses within 24 hours of it being reported to us by any party.
- 5.7. Following the completion of the inspection, customers will receive a written summary of findings within 3 working days of concluding the investigation.
- 5.8. Where mould is present we will categorise it as follows:
 - Severe: To be removed and made safe within 24 hours (Emergency)
 - Moderate: To be removed and made safe within 5 working days (Urgent)
 - Slight: To be removed and made safe within 5 working days (Urgent)
- 5.9. We will consider relevant information about the customer and the home when triaging each case.
- 5.10. We will undertake any remedial repair work identified as necessary to alleviate the cause of damp and mould in our properties, in line with our Repairs and Maintenance Policy. We will begin remedial works within 5 working days, and complete the works within a maximum of 12 weeks of the Surveyors Inspection for complex major repairs.
- 5.11. We will ensure the appropriate levels of ventilation are provided in our properties to reduce the likelihood of damp and mould occurring and carry out tests annually.
- 5.12. We will always work with customers to arrange access appointments that are convenient and appropriate when we need to carry out work to address damp and mould. If customers refuse to provide access, we will consider taking legal action to gain entry when all other efforts have failed. Our repairs policy is also applicable when work is identified.

- 5.13. When intrusive building work is necessary to address complex cases, and/or there is serious and significant risk to the health and safety of customers or members of the household, we may require customers to move out of their home on a temporary or permanent basis. We will begin remedial works within 5 working days and complete the works within a maximum of 12 weeks. All such cases will be dealt with on an individual and risk assessed basis, and customers will be fully supported throughout this process and kept informed.
- 5.14. We will use property & customer data to proactively identify and improve homes that have a high likelihood of suffering from damp and mould problems, in line with our Asset Management Strategy, and also when properties become vacant in line with our Empty Homes Policy.
- 5.15. We will provide all customers who report damp and mould with a follow up check within 3 months of us responding to the case.

6. Support for Customers

- 6.1. We will provide information for customers on our website and in other formats on request, to raise awareness about the different causes of damp and mould. This will include advice about the steps that can be taken within the home to reduce the likelihood of problems occurring and what can be done to tackle them.
- 6.2. We will support customers to access all the income they are entitled to in order to help ensure they can afford to heat their homes.
- 6.3. When customers are living in overcrowded conditions we will help them to explore the re-housing options that are open to them.
- 6.4. We will listen to customers and make reasonable adjustments to meet individual needs and preferences when we respond to reports of damp and mould, for example, meeting specific access requirements. Customers can request a reasonable adjustment at any point during the service delivery process.
- 6.5. Customers who are dissatisfied with our response to reports of damp and mould within their home can make a complaint through the WCHG Complaints procedure. Details of how to make a complaint are available on our website.

7. Significant Non-Compliance and Escalation

- 7.1. WCHG defines significant non-compliance as, any significant incident that has the potential to result in a possible breach of legislation or regulatory standard; or causes a risk to health or safety and needs to be managed as an exception to routine processes and procedures.
- 7.2. All non-compliance issues will be reported and escalated as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after the incident occurred, or of an WCHG employee becoming aware of it.

- 7.3. Any non-compliance issue identified at an operational level will be formally reported to the Executive Director of Assets, who will agree an appropriate course of corrective action with the Operations Manager (Repairs and Maintenance) and report details of the same to the Group Leadership Team (GLT).
- 7.4. In cases of serious non-compliance, GLT and the WCHG Board will consider whether it is necessary to disclose the issue to the Regulator of Social Housing as required by the regulatory framework, or any other relevant organisation such as the Health and Safety Executive.

8. Quality Assurance

- 8.1. We will endeavour to conduct a follow up survey with every customer who has had a damp and mould issue treated in their home, 6 months after the work was completed.
- 8.2. We will confirm with the customer if the issue has been resolved satisfactorily, or if a new investigation is required.

9. Performance Measurement, and Monitoring

- 9.1. We will use a range of performance indicators to monitor and report performance against the damp and mould service, through a tailored Power BI dashboard and reported into Leadership Team for their oversight.
- 9.2. Customers are invited to hold us accountable for our performance and guide the development of priorities, particularly through the Scrutiny Group, and the Customer Experience Committee.
- 9.3. We publish data about our approach to mould and damp on our website. This will include the Tenant Satisfaction measures and data about the complaints we have received from customers and the learning we implemented as a result.

10. Competence, Training and Professionalism

- 10.1. WCHG is committed to realising the capability and potential of colleagues by investing in them through learning, training and professional study. Line managers will use the WCHG Continuous Performance Engagement process to ensure that mandatory training and required qualifications are maintained and kept up to date for all colleagues involved in the delivery of this policy
- 10.2. Our Board is recruited to meet the requirements of the governance skills matrix to ensure appropriate strategic control and oversight is provided across the Group's operations. Members receive regular and ongoing training to ensure skill and competency levels are maintained.
- 10.3. The Executive Director of Assets and the senior management team holds, or working towards the Chartered Institute of Housing Level 5 Diploma in Housing, or equivalent.

- 10.4. The Head of Repairs will hold Level 5 Diploma in Housing, or equivalent and senior managers will also have (or work towards) these qualifications alongside relevant technical qualification in the built environment.
- 10.5. We will check our colleagues & contractors hold the relevant qualifications and accreditations when we deliver or procure work. Where delivered by the Local Authority, we will manage the partnership to reflect these commitments.
- 10.6. We will deliver training on this policy and its supporting procedures through mechanisms including but not limited to:
 - Team Meetings
 - One to one meeting
 - On the job training

11. Roles and Responsibilities

- 11.1. The WCHG Board is responsible for setting the strategic objectives and direction that this policy supports and approval of the policy as one of the 'big 8' compliance policies.
- 11.2. The Customer Experience Committee are responsible for considering the customer impact of this policy and receiving customer experience performance data.
- 11.3. The Dev. & Homes Committee are responsible for the oversight and delivery of this policy including its recommendation for approval to Board.
- 11.4. The Executive Director of Assets has strategic responsibility for, and oversight of the implementation of this policy.
- 11.5. The Head of Repairs is responsible for the operational delivery, management, and monitoring of this policy.
- 11.6. The Head of Housing Services is responsible for ensuring decent and support services are in place when customers need to be removed from a hazardous environment.
- 11.7. The Operations Manager (Repairs and Maintenance) is responsible for delivering the Damp and Mould Service.

12. Equality and Diversity

- 12.1. WCHG are committed to providing excellent customer services, which are fair, equitable and inclusive. We will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no-one is discriminated against directly or indirectly because of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and in line with our reasonable adjustments statement.
- 12.2. We recognise that some protected groups may be disproportionately impacted and will take additional steps in the application of this policy and make reasonable adjustments to ensure compliance with the Act. If you require this policy in a different format,

translated, large print, easy read, braille, or an audio copy, contact us by phone on: 0300 111 0000 or by email: inclusionanddiversity@wchg.org.uk

Appendix 1 Other statutory and regulatory requirements and guidance.

- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) (Amendment) Regulations 1994
- Housing Act 2004
- HHSRS, (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) Guidance for housing inspections 2004
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Building Regulations 2010
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Building Safety Act 2022
- The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- The Building (Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023
- Regulator of Social Housing – Safety and Quality Standard 2024
- Social Housing Regulations 2023
- Awaabs Law – Guidance for Tenants – Nov 2025

This list is not exhaustive, but it highlights that Awaab's Law operates alongside, rather than replaces, existing legal duties.