



Damp and Mould Policy

October 2024

Owner: Customer Relations & Service Improvement Manager (Damp & Mould)

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V2.0	Full Review	16/10/2024	Community Voice	March 2027
V1.0	New Policy	28/03/2023	Group Common Board	March 2024

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1. Our policy is...

- 1.1 Ongo Homes properties will be well maintained and free from property defects causing damp and mould that could risk damage to the buildings and / or the health and safety of tenants, leaseholders and members of their households living in those properties.
- 1.2 Ongo Homes will take prompt and effective action to reports of damp in all properties owned and managed by us and any communal areas and take proactive steps to manage and control it, whilst ensuring compliance with all statutory, regulatory and contractual requirements.
- 1.3 Ongo Homes is committed to providing support and advice to our customers who are experiencing damp, mould and condensation in their homes. Full consideration will be given to customer's vulnerabilities and reasonable adjustments will be made where possible. Please refer to our Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
- 1.4 Where Ongo tenants refuse to engage with Ongo Homes or comply with the terms of their tenancy agreement, Ongo will take the necessary steps to address such issues and ensure that health and safety risks in the home are addressed.

2. It applies to...

- 2.1 This policy applies to:
 - All tenants who live in a property owned by Ongo Homes
 - All customers who hold a leaseholder agreement with us where the property defect falls under Ongo's repair responsibility as per the terms of the lease
 - Customers who own their home through shared ownership, where Ongo Homes has a repairing obligation under the terms of the lease
 - All property communal areas
- 2.2 This policy does not cover complaints in relation to damp, mould and condensation. Complaints relating to damp, mould and condensation will be managed in line with our Complaints and Feedback Policy.

3. Because we want to...

- 3.1 The aims of this policy are to ensure that:
 - We manage the risks arising from hazardous damp and mould in our properties, including in communal areas
 - We provide homes and leasehold premises (homes and commercial premises) that are safe, warm and dry
 - We carry out damp and mould related repairs within specified timescales
 - We are clear about tenant / leaseholder responsibilities and the responsibilities of Ongo Homes in respect of controlling, managing and eliminating hazardous damp, mould and condensation in our properties

4. Causes for damp in a property include:

Rising damp

- Water marks rising up to 1.5m from ground floor level
- Peeling wallpaper or flaking plaster
- White, salt crystals

Penetration damp

- Isolated patches of damp/mould growth on walls or ceilings
- wet or dried/staining on walls or ceilings, areas where a leak is or has occurred
- block or overflowing guttering/downpipes, possibly with green or white marks on brickwork
- Roofing defects - missing tiles, lead flashing coming away or missing
- Mould growth, wet patches or issues with seals around windows or doors
- Damp patches on chimney breasts and chimneys not being capped off

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

Condensation

- Water collecting on the inside of windows or on the windowsill
- Rotting and peeling wallpaper
- Mould growing on clothes and other fabrics
- A strong musty smell

5. We will...

- 5.1 Ongo Homes will investigate reports of damp and mould within 14 calendar days and begin to implement repair solutions that includes mould washes within 7 calendar days following the investigation. For cases where a category 1 or 2 HHSRS hazard is identified, these will be identified internally as Amber and Red cases. For any other reports of damp and mould where there is no category 1 or 2 hazard Ongo's standard repair timescales will apply..
- 5.2 Ongo will determine the risk rating of the damp and mould case with due consideration of household vulnerabilities as to whether there are any or not, location and exposure of the mould to the household is anyone in the household likely to spend more than 2 hours a day in the same room as the damp and mould, and severity of the damp and mould by size of the patch of mould. A risk rating document that includes a risk rating matrix will be used to provide an overall risk rating of each case, White, Green, Amber and Red. The risk rating will determine the response from Ongo as set out in the Risk Rating document and Damp & Mould Procedure.

- 5.3 Where damp and mould issues do not arise from a property defect but they present issues that affect the health and safety of tenants / leaseholder or members of their household and / or make the property unfit for human habitation, Ongo Homes will investigate and consider improvements that could be implemented to alleviate the problem and improve the condition of the property.
- 5.4 To help those living in an Ongo Homes property, and understand the responsibilities detailed within their tenancy agreement, lease or licence, regarding the control of damp and condensation and reporting of repairs immediately, Ongo Homes will provide appropriate advice, guidance and support to ensure a safe and healthy environment for tenants and leaseholders.
- 5.5 In some cases we may need to decant tenants to alternative accommodation whilst work is carried out. This will be done in line with our Decant Policy and Procedure.
- 5.6 In cases where Ongo are unable to gain access for investigation, diagnosis or repair, Ongo will follow the No Access Procedure.
- 5.7 Ongo Homes, where necessary and appropriate, will take tenancy action where tenants are not complying with their tenancy agreements.
- 5.8 Ongo will make sure that the fabric of its buildings is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp, mould and condensation.
- 5.9 Ongo will issue a follow up digital survey to all customers 6 months after their damp, mould or condensation case has been closed. For tenants where a mobile number and email is not available on our housing management system, we will call the tenant on their landline. Where there is no contact telephone number or email, we will post a letter.

6. Making sure we do what we say...

- 6.1 The Property Director has overall responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented.
- 6.2 The Maintenance Operations Manager is responsible for monitoring the application of the policy across all reports of damp, mould and condensation to Ongo Homes.
- 6.3 Ongo will issue damp and mould awareness training across the organisation at least once every two years to front-line, technical and non-technical colleagues. This training will be mandatory for all identified colleagues who are likely to encounter damp and mould in tenant and customers' homes.
- 6.4 This policy will be monitored in line with the following KPIs:
- Number of cases reported by month
 - Categorisation of seriousness (using the matrix in Appendix 1)

- How many cases closed in month
- How many cases closed within target timescales

6.5 Reports against this policy and the KPIs will be provided within the Health and Safety report to Group Audit and Risk committee and also Board, Leadership team and Community Voice.

7. Other things to bear in mind...

7.1 This policy also links to our:

- Damp & Mould operational procedure
- Health & Safety Policy
- Maintenance Policy
- Decant Policy & Procedure
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Tenancy Agreements
- Disrepair Procedure
- Ongo Homes Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Compensation Policy and Procedure
- Ongo Customer Charters (Service Standards)
- No Access Procedure
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy

7.2 The main pieces of legislation and regulation relevant to this policy include:

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 Section 11 Repairs & Maintenance
- Housing Act 1985
- Home (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Act 2004 – Health and Safety Rating
- Decent Homes Standard
- Regulatory Standards – Home Standard, Neighbourhood & Community Standard
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Housing Health & Safety Rating System
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990

8. We'll look at this again...

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years. We will review earlier if required to ensure legal and regulatory compliance, in line with learning from complaints and / or case management and to align to good practice.

9. What we mean...

Reference	Definition
Condensation	Appears when excess moisture in the air meets a cold surface, such as a window or a cold wall. It can lead to mould growth and tends to be worse in winter.

Penetrating damp	Penetrating damp is caused by water coming through external walls or the roof. It can also happen when there is an internal leak.
Rising damp	Groundwater soaking up into the bricks or concrete is known as rising damp.