

Damp and Mould Policy

Feldon Housing Limited

1. Introduction

1.1 Feldon Housing Limited recognises that damp and mould can have serious impacts on residents' health, safety, and wellbeing. We are committed to taking swift action to investigate and resolve all damp and mould issues in our properties.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to protecting residents from the harmful effects of damp and mould, complies with Awaab's Law (coming into force 27 October 2025), and reflects our zero-tolerance approach to hazardous living conditions.

We will never blame residents for damp and mould in their homes. Our focus is on identifying the root causes and providing effective, lasting solutions.

2. Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by:

- **Awaab's Law - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** (in force from 27 October 2025)
- **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985** - our duty to keep properties in repair
- **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018** - ensuring homes are safe and habitable
- **Housing Act 2004** - Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- **Decent Homes Standard** - properties must be free from Category 1 hazards
- **Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards 2024**

3. Our Commitments

We commit to:

- **Taking every report of damp and mould seriously** and responding promptly
- **Never blaming residents** for damp and mould conditions
- **Investigating root causes** not just treating symptoms
- **Working with residents** to reduce the risk of damp and mould in the future
- **Providing clear communication** throughout the process
- **Following strict legal timescales** under Awaab's Law

- **Offering appropriate support** including alternative accommodation when needed
- **Learning from every case** to prevent future occurrences
- **Working in partnership** with residents to maintain healthy homes

4. How to Report Damp and Mould

You can report damp and mould by:

Telephone: 01608 686626

Email: info@feldonhousing.co.uk

In person/in writing: Unit 7 Brailes Industrial Estate, Lower Brailes, Banbury OX15 5JW

Emergency out-of-hours: - 01608 686626 for serious health impacts

What to tell us:

- Location and extent of damp/mould, with photos if possible
- How long the problem has existed
- Any health symptoms you're experiencing
- Details of anyone vulnerable in the household (children, elderly, health conditions)
- Whether the problem is getting worse
- Any previous attempts to resolve the issue

5. What we will do

Emergency Damp and Mould Hazards

When we classify as emergency:

- Damp/mould having immediate material impact on resident health
- Extensive mould covering large areas or multiple rooms
- Vulnerable residents (children, elderly, those with health conditions) experiencing breathing difficulties
- Structural water ingress causing flooding (such as water coming in from the walls or ceiling)

What we will do:

- **Investigate and make safe: Within 24 hours**

Reference 10.D

- Provide written findings and an action plan straight afterwards
- Offer alternative accommodation if your home is unsafe

Significant Damp and Mould Hazards

When we classify as significant:

- Visible mould growth affecting room use
- Persistent damp causing damage to property or belongings
- Health impacts being experienced by residents
- Risk of problem worsening without intervention

What we will do:

- **Investigate: Within 10 working days** of report
- **Send you our findings in writing: Within 3 working days** of investigation completion
- **Begin the remedial work: Within 5 working days** of investigation
- **Complete the work: Within a reasonable timescale** (maximum 12 weeks for complex cases)

Vulnerability Assessment

We assess household vulnerability considering:

- **Age** - children under 11, adults over 65
- **Health conditions** - respiratory conditions, compromised immune systems, disabilities
- **Pregnancy** - expectant mothers and newborns
- **Long-term illness** - conditions that may be worsened by damp/mould

Vulnerable households with damp/mould are prioritised for emergency response.

6. Our Investigation Process

Stage 1: Initial Assessment (Within timescales above)

We will:

- Arrange prompt inspection by qualified surveyor
- Assess extent and severity of damp/mould
- Identify potential causes (structural, heating, ventilation, lifestyle)

Reference 10.D

- Consider household vulnerability factors
- Take photographs for records
- Test moisture levels and air quality where appropriate

We assess:

- Building defects (leaks, poor insulation, inadequate ventilation)
- Heating system adequacy and efficiency
- Ventilation provision and effectiveness
- Previous repair history
- Environmental factors

Stage 2: Written Findings Report

We will provide:

- A clear explanation of findings and root causes
- A categorisation of hazard level (emergency/significant/no hazard)
- A detailed action plan with timescales
- Interim measures if needed
- Responsibilities (ours and residents')
- Contact details for queries

The report will include:

- Photos and technical details
- Work required and timescales
- Expected completion dates
- Alternative accommodation arrangements if needed
- Follow-up inspection schedule

Stage 3: Remedial Action

Work begins within 5 working days of investigation (significant hazards):

Immediate actions may include:

- Emergency repairs to stop water ingress
- Mould cleaning and treatment

Reference 10.D

- Improved ventilation provision
- Temporary heating solutions
- Alternative accommodation arrangements

Permanent solutions may include:

- Structural repairs (roof, walls, windows)
- Heating system replacement/upgrade
- Ventilation improvement (extractor fans, vents)
- Insulation installation
- Damp-proofing works
- Complete redecoration after treatment

7. Alternative Accommodation

Please see our Temporary Location Policy

When we provide alternative accommodation:

- The home is unsafe to live in during remedial work
- Extensive works are required
- Health risks cannot be immediately resolved
- Emergency evacuation required

We will provide:

- **Suitable accommodation** meeting household needs
- **Located near existing home** where possible
- **At no cost to residents**
- **For full duration of works**
- **Assistance with moving** and utility arrangements

Suitable accommodation considers:

- Household size and composition
- Accessibility needs and disabilities
- School/work proximity
- Pet accommodation where appropriate

Reference 10.D

- Storage for belongings during works

8. Prevention and Early Intervention

Proactive Identification

We identify damp/mould through:

- Annual gas safety inspections
- Routine property inspections
- Planned maintenance visits
- Void property checks
- Resident reports and concerns
- Stock condition surveys

Resident Education and Support

We provide:

- **Free advice** on preventing condensation and mould
- **Guidance** on heating, ventilation, and household activities
- **Support** with energy efficiency and bill management
- **Information** about signs to watch for and when to report issues

Prevention advice includes:

- Adequate heating (minimum 18-21°C in living areas)
- Regular ventilation (opening windows, using extractor fans)
- Avoiding activities that create excess moisture without ventilation
- Positioning furniture away from external walls
- Recognising early signs of damp/mould

9. Working with Residents

Partnership Approach

We work with residents to:

- Understand how the property is used and any challenges
- Provide practical advice and support
- Identify any barriers to maintaining healthy conditions

Reference 10.D

- Ensure solutions work for household circumstances
- Monitor effectiveness of interventions

No-Blame Culture

We will never:

- Blame residents for damp and mould problems
- Assume lifestyle causes without proper investigation
- Refuse to investigate because of perceived resident behaviour
- Delay action while conducting extensive lifestyle assessments

We recognise that:

- Modern living inevitably creates moisture
- Many residents face challenges heating homes adequately
- Building defects are primary cause of most damp/mould
- Quick action prevents health impacts and property damage

10. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Performance Monitoring

We monitor:

- Response times to emergency and significant hazards
- Investigation completion within legal timescales
- Resident satisfaction with our response
- Recurrence rates and long-term effectiveness
- Complaints and Housing Ombudsman referrals

Key Performance Indicators:

- 100% emergency damp/mould cases responded to within 24 hours
- 100% significant cases investigated within 10 working days
- 100% written findings provided within 3 working days
- 95% remedial work commenced within 5 working days
- 90% resident satisfaction with damp/mould resolution

Learning and Improvement

We learn from:

- Every damp and mould case reported
- Resident feedback and suggestions
- Best practice from other housing associations
- Guidance from regulators and sector experts
- New technology and treatment methods

We use learning to:

- Improve our investigation procedures
- Enhance contractor specifications and training
- Update resident advice and guidance
- Invest in property improvements
- Prevent future occurrences

11. Contractor Management

Qualified Specialists

All damp/mould work undertaken by:

- Qualified damp and mould specialists
- Contractors with proven track record
- Operatives trained in health and safety procedures
- Teams experienced in occupied property work
- Specialists in root cause analysis

Quality Standards

We require contractors to:

- Complete work to industry standards
- Use appropriate materials and methods
- Minimise disruption to residents
- Provide guarantees for work completed
- Follow health and safety procedures
- Communicate effectively with residents

12. Health and Safety

Resident Protection

During investigation and work:

- Risk assessments completed before work starts
- Appropriate protective measures for residents
- Safe working procedures followed
- Contaminated materials disposed of safely
- Air quality monitored during and after work

Worker Protection

Our contractors must:

- Use appropriate PPE for mould exposure
- Follow HSE guidance for damp/mould work
- Implement safe working procedures
- Protect against cross-contamination
- Provide training for all operatives

13. Record Keeping

Documentation Requirements

We maintain records of:

- All reports and initial assessments
- Investigation findings and evidence
- Work orders and completion certificates
- Alternative accommodation arrangements
- Resident communication and feedback
- Follow-up inspections and monitoring

Records are kept for:

- Regulatory compliance and inspection
- Learning and performance improvement
- Defending against legal challenges

Reference 10.D

- Tracking long-term property performance
- Supporting insurance and warranty claims

14. Complaints

You can:

- Contact us to discuss concerns informally
- Make a formal complaint through our complaints procedure
- Contact the Housing Ombudsman if dissatisfied with our response
- Seek independent advice from Citizens Advice or Shelter
- Take legal action under Awaab's Law if we fail to meet timescales

Our Complaints Process

If you are unhappy with our service:

Informal Resolution

- Contact us immediately to discuss concerns
- We'll try to resolve issues quickly and informally

Formal Complaint

- Use our formal two stage complaints procedure
- Full investigation and written response within 20 working days at each stage
- Clear explanation of findings and any remedial action

Stage 3: Housing Ombudsman

- Contact the Housing Ombudsman if you are dissatisfied with our final response
- The Housing Ombudsman provides free, independent service for social housing residents
- Phone: 0300 111 3000 or www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk

More information can be found in our Complaints Policy.

15. Vulnerable Residents

Additional Support

For vulnerable residents we provide:

- Priority response and investigation

Reference 10.D

- Enhanced communication and explanation
- Liaison with support workers or advocates
- Consideration of specific health needs
- Flexible appointment arrangements
- Additional follow-up and monitoring

16. Communication and Information

Keeping You Informed

Throughout the process we will:

- Acknowledge reports within 1 working day
- Provide regular updates on progress
- Explain findings in clear, simple language
- Give realistic timescales for completion
- Respond promptly to queries and concerns

Accessible Information

We provide information in:

- Plain English
- Large print format
- Audio format
- Different languages
- Easy read versions
- British Sign Language (on request)

17. Review and Improvement

Policy Review

This policy will be:

- Reviewed annually or following significant incidents
- Updated to reflect changes in law or best practice
- Developed through consultation with residents
- Approved by the Board following review

Reference 10.D

- Published on our website in accessible formats

Continuous Improvement

We commit to:

- Regular review of procedures and performance
- Investment in staff training and development
- Adoption of new technology and methods
- Benchmarking against sector best practice
- Learning from resident feedback and complaints

18. Related Feldon Housing policies

- Adjustments to Services Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Temporary Relocation Policy
- Complaints Policy

19. Contact Information

For damp and mould reports, complaints or queries about this policy:

Get in touch with Feldon Housing

By phone: 01608 686626

Email: info@feldonhousing.co.uk

Write to us: Feldon Housing Ltd, Unit 7 Brailes Industrial Estate, Lower Brailes, Banbury OX15 5JW

Emergency out-of-hours: 01608 686626

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Approval Date: [To be completed]

Review Date: [Annual review date]

Reference 10.D

This policy is available in alternative formats including large print, audio, and other languages on request.