

DAMP AND MOULD



Advance recognises the health implications that are associated with living in damp and/or mouldy environments and will ensure a proactive approach is taken and repairs are completed in a timely manner.



Annual visits of all properties by Regional Housing Officers will help to identify homes with damp or mould issues.



The damp and mould repairs inspection regime will be enhanced to monitor the property at 6 and 12 months after the repair.



Advance colleagues will be adequately trained in our responsibilities around Damp and Mould.



Customers are encouraged to report repairs, advised of the risks around damp and mould and will be assisted as necessary by our Housing Teams.

Key Changes (Summary):

New Policy

POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This Policy outlines the way in which Advance will consider the impact of Damp and Mould to our Customers' homes and communal areas. Advance aims to fully maintain its properties through structured and informed repairs, servicing and maintenance programmes carried out as part of an overarching Asset Management Strategy. Advance is committed to providing an effective service to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction and remain compliant with Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) Decent Homes legislation.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The Policy focuses on a 'Property First' approach to the maintenance of our homes, where damp and/or mould have been identified. This means ensuring that our Surveyors, other colleagues and Contractors are prioritising property defects and preventative actions ahead of human factors which may also play a part. In addition, we need to consider how we can support our customers with property improvements that can help to manage damp and mould in their homes.

DEFINITION

The presence of damp can result in mould on walls, ceilings, window frames and furniture/ carpets. Damp and cold homes encourage the growth of mould and can in some cases when left untreated increase the risk to occupants from respiratory diseases. Damp can be caused by:

- Condensation caused by high levels of moisture in the air
- Leaking pipes, wastes or overflows
- Rain seeping through the roof where a slate or tile is missing
- Blocked guttering, cracked or loose rainwater pipes
- Rising damp due to a defective damp proof course or membrane

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Damp and Mould policy and associated procedures and action plans are:

- To ensure our homes are free from damp and mould where practicable.
- To ensure that our homes are protected from deterioration and damage resulting from damp and mould.
- To consider how we communicate with our customers about the causes and effects of impacts of damp and mould.
- To consider how we communicate more specifically when there are fabric first changes to the property through the planned maintenance programmes.
- To analyse our housing stock condition data, repair requests, complaints and other data sources to proactively identify where intervention on damp and mould is needed.
- To provide the most appropriate property improvements which can help to reduce condensation and support our customers to use these tools to minimise a recurrence of damp and/or mould.
- To engage with both tenants and colleagues about the health risks of living in damp and/or mouldy homes and to encourage the timely reporting of repairs.
- To ensure Advance and its contractors meet all their statutory and legal obligations.

REGULATORY STANDARDS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985** – Advance is responsible under Section 11 for maintaining the structure and exterior of our properties (including drains, gutters, and external pipes) and installations in the property for the supply of water, gas and electricity; and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences).

The **Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health and Safety Ratings System** - Where Advance as the landlord would be responsible to look after, the exterior of the dwelling and structural elements of the dwelling, and the inside facilities which are part of the dwelling.

The **Home Standard 2012** – Where Advance as a Registered Provider shall ensure that tenant's homes meet the standard set out in Section 5 of the Decent Homes Standard (2006) and continue to maintain their homes to at least that standard. Advance will also

ensure that it meets all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants of their homes.

Decent Homes (2006) Section 5 – To be decent, a dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards. This will include the existence of damp/ and or mould.

DAMP AND MOULD RESPONSE – REACTIVE AND PROACTIVE

Reports of damp and mould will be managed in accordance with the Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Procedure. It is anticipated that damp or mould repairs will go beyond a 'repair' and fall into an enhanced inspection regime. In addition to the repair, a review will be undertaken on at least 2 further occasions, which is triggered by a Damp and Mould component. The inspection cycles will only be completed once we are satisfied that the property is no longer showing signs of damp or mould. This is included as a process in Appendix 1.

The Regional Housing Officers' annual visits of tenancies will also incorporate a visual inspection for damp and mould in all properties as a preventative measure.

Stock condition surveys are also undertaken on a 5-year rolling programme of all properties. These will identify any issues with damp and mould that need to be tackled, either immediately or as part of a planned programme.

DATA PROTECTION

Where personal information of any individual is collected, shared or otherwise processed in pursuit of the objectives of or guidance within this policy, this must be performed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy, the Information Security Policy, the General Data Protection Regulations, and any other relevant guidance on handling personal data responsibly.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

In line with our organisational Values, Advance is committed to promoting positive attitudes to diversity, to encouraging inclusion and social cohesion, and fostering good relations between people with diverse characteristics. We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment, and building a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency. Advance opposes, and will not tolerate any unlawful discrimination, harassment, or victimisation on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or religious belief, sex, sexual orientation, or any other grounds that cause a person to be treated with injustice.

Advance has an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy which it will apply consistently and treat all customers and employees with fairness and respect. Advance is also committed to do more through our Equality Diversity and Inclusion working group that will help inform, underpin and reinforce our PRIDE values.

Related Policies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and Maintenance Policy • Complaints Policy • Tenancy Management Policy and Procedures • Health and Safety Policy
Related Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1 Damp and Mould Process

Administrative purposes only:

Policy owner:	Executive Director of Housing		
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Review written/refreshed by:	n/a	Date:	
Draft consulted upon with:	Service Improvement Manager Head of Property Services		
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