



Mould & Dampness Procedure

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INTRODUCTION

This procedure gives clear guidelines and puts in place a mould and dampness procedure for Castlehill Housing Association (CHA) staff to ensure that CHA delivers a consistent standard when dealing with mould and damp and to give staff clear guidelines on what works should be done if mould and damp is found within a CHA property. This procedure will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis, the organisation will follow best practice and innovation within the sector.

SCOPE

The procedure outlines the various stages that are required and gives clear guidance on what is required from all staff involved from start to finish. We will be proactive rather than reactive.

PURPOSES OF MOULD AND DAMPNESS PROCEDURE

This procedure has been put in place by CHA to provide a consistent approach for dealing with mould and dampness and adopt a zero-tolerance approach to mould and damp.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Property Services Manager (PSM) has overall responsibility for ensuring the procedure is followed. The Senior Property Services Officer (SPSO) has day to day responsibility of ensuring the staff that they line manage are following the procedure. The Property Services officers (PSOs) have a responsibility to follow the procedure and if any variation from the procedure arises, they must get approval from the SPSO or PSM before raising any works orders.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduction
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Reporting mould and dampness
4. Contacting the tenant
5. What happens at the first visit
6. What happens at the second visit
7. Results
8. Independent Surveys

9. Complaints

10. Monitoring and Reporting

| Task | Responsibility |
|------------------------------|---|
| Reporting Mould and Dampness | Tenant, tenant's representative, Property Services Officer (PSO) Housing Officer (HO) also including all staff and contractors. |
| Contacting the tenant | PSO, Customer Services Officer (CSO) Customer Services Assistant (CSA) |
| First Visit | PSO |
| Second Visit | PSO and Senior Property Services Officer (SPSO) |
| Results | PSO |
| Independent Survey | Approved contractor |
| Complaints | Whoever receives complaint |
| | |

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure describes the activities and responsibilities of staff involved in carrying out inspections and investigations when mould and dampness are reported within a CHA property.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The overall aims and objectives of the procedure are to contribute to the efficient and effective maintenance of CHA's housing stock, and to ensure that expenditure is managed effectively.
- 2.2 Training will be given to staff, when required, to ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the procedure.

- 2.3 We will publish mould, dampness and condensation advice on our web site and provide a tenant Condensation and Mould advice leaflet.
- 5.2.4 Excellent communication and short timescales in dealing with such issues should be our priority.

3. Reporting mould and dampness

- 3.1 A tenant or tenant's representative can contact CHA in several ways to report mould and dampness. The main point of contact is through the Customer Service officers however you (PSO, HSO staff) may also receive a report via letter, email or in person. However, the process is the same.
- 3.2 If the tenant contacts CHA by telephone the CSO will raise an inspection for the address in the first instance and records this on contact management.
- 3.3 If the request is received by any of the other methods listed under 3.1 then an inspection is raised by the CSO or CSA.
- 3.4 PSOs are to test all properties for dampness at void inspection.
- 3.5 PSOs to check for mould and dampness at void inspections and record on inspection FastFields document and raise appropriate works orders.
- 3.6 POSs to inspect ventilation systems and record on FastFields documents and arrange for repairs or servicing as required.

4. Contacting the tenant

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the PSO to contact the tenant, to arrange with them a suitable time to visit the property to inspect the mould/dampness. This must be within working 3 days.
- 4.2 Before contacting the tenant, the PSO should check the repair history of the property to ascertain if there have been previous reports of mould/dampness.
- 4.3 The PSO should check what planned maintenance works have been carried out or are due to be carried out before calling and this must be noted on a Fastfields Inspection sheet.
- 4.4 The details of the arranged appointment should be recorded in **Teams, Mould & Dampness in the Files section, and on contact management on Q/L.**

5. What happens at the first visit

- 5.1 The PSO will show the necessary empathy and must be seen to take the reported issue seriously.
- 5.2 When attending the property in the first instance the PSO will take the damp meter to assess the moisture and humidity levels of any affected areas and carry out a full survey on the Fastfields inspection document and record moisture and humidity levels and all other

relevant information noted on the Fastfield document and photos of the affected areas must be taken on the Fastfields document.

- 5.3 It may be necessary to drill into plasterwork and take readings using probes to determine if the wall is dryer at different depths within its structure.
- 5.4 It may also be necessary to arrange for floor hatches to be lifted and walls to be opened to inspect the cavity (try and arrange walls to be opened externally where not common to avoid internal decoration damage etc) PSO must attend when hatches etc are lifted.
- 5.5 Take photos showing damp meter readings on Fastfields document and keep these Electronically in **Teams, Mould & Dampness in the Files section**.
- 5.6 Assess the risk factors of residents (mould and dampness) having a greater effect on the very young, very old and with health issues. If mould is found the PSO will arrange for this to be removed by a specialist contractor using a chemical wash suitable for removing mould and coat the wall with a mould inhibitor. If necessary, a further works order should be issued **for the affected area** to be painted with a mould retardant paint, **colour matched** to the surrounding paints.
- 5.7 The PSO will then explain to the tenant or tenant's representative what the purpose of the damp meter is and show and explain the findings of the test and give details of any follow up works.
- 5.8 A letter must be sent to the tenant advising of the meter readings and findings from the Fastfields inspection also detailing any works that may or may not be required to the property, this must be saved in Capture. The letter that should be used is shown at appendix 1.
- 5.9 If dampness is suspected in the property at this visit the PSO must complete the Investigation Fastfields inspection document shown at appendix 2 and pass to the SPSO. The PSO must update Q/L contacts.
- 5.10 If when the PSO attends the appointment there is no one at home the PSO must record this on the notes and send out a letter appendix 3 advising that the inspection has been cancelled and if they would like to arrange a further appointment to contact the CHA.

6. What happens at the second visit

- 6.1 If following the first inspection of the suspected mould/dampness a further report is received this again should be logged on the system in the form of an inspection for the PSO and SPSO to attend.
- 6.2 The PSO and SPSO will be able to see from the previous notes the recorded meter readings and any actions that were taken after the initial visit.
- 6.3 The PSO will make an appointment to visit the property to fit a data logger. The PSO will provide the tenant with a detailed account of the purpose of the data logger see appendix 4.
- 6.4 The PSO is responsible for programming the data logger to ensure that the relevant information is captured at regular intervals. Usually, hourly.

- 6.5 The data logger will be left in the property for approximately 7 to 14 days and will be uplifted at a mutually convenient time to the tenant.
- 6.6 We will continue to innovate and look at improved data collection devices as these are developed and introduced to collect more advanced data.

7. Results

- 7.1 The PSO is responsible for downloading the information stored on the data logger and this information will be analysed by the SPSO.
- 7.2 The PSO will produce a report for the tenant regarding the findings of the data logger including the sequence of events that led to the data logger being fitted in the property. An example of a report is shown at appendix 4.
- 7.3 The results of the data logger should be discussed with the tenant and recorded in **Teams, Mould & Dampness in the Files section in the Mould and Dampness spreadsheet**. when this was done.
- 7.4 The Fastfields document will detail any further action required and who is responsible for this. If no works are required, this will also be highlighted within the report and any recommendations listed for the tenant's action/attention.
- 7.5 Any compensation issues should be considered. For instance, rent rebate for a room that cannot be used on temporary basis.
- 7.6 Agree triggers to escalate cases to senior staff, Director of Housing Services (DHS) and Director of Property Assets (DPA). The examples of this could be where a room is so badly affected that it can no longer be used, where there is a highly vulnerable member of the household such as a new baby, very ill or elderly person, where the works require the engagement of an owner to proceed, and they will not agree.
- 7.7 Recommendations when tenants should be decanted due to mould and dampness issues – whether temporary for investigation or pending works.
- 7.8 This should be explained in full to the tenant and recorded in **Teams, Mould & Dampness in the Files section in the Mould & Dampness spreadsheet** when this was explained and who was present at the time.
- 7.9 It is at this time that the investigation Fastfield document (appendix 2) should be completed regardless of if works are required at the property. This is to ensure that CHA hold an accurate account of actions taken and the condition of the property.
- 7.10 Deal with contaminated salts. If previous dampness has caused contamination to plaster work, ensure it is renewed to prevent this becoming an area where condensation re-appears.
- 7.11 Follow up with the tenant within 3 months of advice given or remedial work carried out.

8. Independent Surveys By External Surveyor

- 8.1 Prior to instructing an independent survey, the PSO will forward all of the survey information to allow the independent surveyor to produce a report on the findings of the Data Logger and information provided. This will be sent to the SPSO who will instruct if necessary.
- 8.2 It may be necessary on occasion to instruct an independent survey of the property if the tenant continues to dispute the findings of both the damp meter and the data logger.
- 8.3 An independent survey should only be carried out after steps 5, 6 and 7 have been carried out and should be instructed by the SPSO.
- 8.4 On occasion a tenant may instruct their own independent survey if they believe that CHA's findings are incorrect. If you are provided with a copy of a survey from a tenant this must be discussed with the Property Services Manager before any further action is taken.

9. Complaints

- 9.1 If a tenant or tenant's representative is unhappy with the way in which the investigation has been carried out or the way in which the staff have handled the process, then a complaint can be raised.
- 9.2 Potential insurance claims should be flagged up early to CHAs member of staff who liaises with insurance claims. SPSO

10. Monitoring and Reporting

- 10.1 Each PSO is responsible for keeping a record of data loggers reports and surveys carried out. All contacts and visits must be recorded in **Teams, Mould & Dampness in the Files section in the Mould & Dampness spreadsheet** and under the address on contact management on Q/L.
 - Name and address of tenant
 - Date of first visit
 - Results
 - Date tenant advised
 - Date of second visit
 - Name of PSO who attended
 - Results
 - Date tenant advised
 - Who carried out independent survey
 - Date independent survey carried out
 - Conclusion from survey
 - Details of difference between CHA survey and independent survey.
- 10.2 The Senior Property Services officer is responsible for collating the relevant information for reports when required.
- 10.3 This process will be reviewed in 6 months and any changes to improve performance and/or service will be made.

Appendices

| Appendix Number | Description |
|-----------------|---|
| 1 | Letter for outcome of 1 st Visit |
| 2 | Investigation Fastfields document |
| 3 | Letter for missed appointment |
| 4 | Example of report for data logger results |
| 5 | Mould & Condensation Leaflet |

Appendix 1 – Findings Letter

[Appendix 1 - Findings Letter.docx](#)

Appendix 2 – Fastfields Inspection Document in Teams, Mould & Damp in the Files under Mould and Dampness Inspection

[Mould and Condensation Inspection.pdf](#)

Appendix 3 – No Access Letter

[Appendix 3 - No Access Letter.docx](#)

Appendix 4 – Date, Conclusion and Recommendations Letter

[Appendix 4 - Data, Conclusion & Recommendations Letter.docx](#)

Appendix 5 – Mould & Condensation Leaflet

[Condensation info \(5\) 18.1.23.pdf](#)