

# **EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURE**

### **Damp, Mould & Condensation Management (PM)**

#### **SP50**

|                             |                                          |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
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|            |           |                                                               |                                  |
|            |           |                                                               |                                  |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document has been created to provide a suitable and sufficient procedure to help mitigate the risks associated with Damp, Mould & Condensation (DMC) in its Housing stock at East Dunbartonshire Council.

It is important to understand that damp and mould can affect a person's health & safety which primarily affect the airways and lungs, but they can also affect the eyes and skin. The respiratory effects of damp and mould can cause serious illness and, in the most severe cases, death. In addition to physical health issues, mental health impact may also result from continued exposure to DMC. Anxiety and depression can be attributed to the constant presence of DMC.

Everyone is vulnerable to the health impacts of damp and mould, but people with certain health conditions, children and older adults are at greater risk of more severe health impacts. The presence of damp and mould can also affect tenants' mental health. This could be due to worries about the health impacts of damp and mould, unpleasant living conditions, and destruction of property and belongings, among other concerns.

East Dunbartonshire Council must adhere to a number of regulations (see section 9 titled References for more information). A lack of compliance can place the Council at risk of prosecution or financial penalties.

## 2. PURPOSE

According to the Scottish House Condition Survey 2022, around 10% of homes in Scotland are affected by condensation and damp. Social housing and low-income communities where there are often overcrowding, a lack of appropriate heating, ventilation, and insulation, can experience a substantially higher proportion of damp and mould than the national average.

The Council wants to ensure that its tenants and communities have warm, safe, and healthy homes to live in and as a basic right, which should be fulfilled by the Council.

East Dunbartonshire Council will ensure that a purposeful approach is adopted with the prevention, treatment and remediation of damp and mould which will benefit its tenants. The Council has a robust management system which will incorporate the analysis of data and risk profiling, improved reporting and identification of mould, condensation and dampness, end-to-end customer service with better joined up advice, guidance and support, and preventative technology systems.

East Dunbartonshire Council will focus on solutions to manage dampness and mould; the tenant's "lifestyle" will not be the focus when attributing causes of issues found. Unless a tenant is misusing their home's ventilation or other systems, the Council will avoid assigning blame or using language that makes residents feel targeted. Our homes will be suitable for modern living where tenants can complete everyday activities without being unjustly held responsible for causing dampness.

This procedure aims to set out the approach East Dunbartonshire Council will take to prevent and address any cases of damp and/or mould in its housing stock. The Council aim to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould.

### **3. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all East Dunbartonshire Council, employees, who may include but not limited to the following key stakeholders, Management team, team leaders, trades personnel, call handlers, surveyors, housing and repair officers, contractors, tenants, and trade unions.

### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **4.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for health and safety and for making sure that damp and mould is managed effectively.

It is important to acknowledge that the Chief Executive's responsibilities are shared, in that the Executive Officers and Service Managers will be responsible and accountable within their areas of responsibility for managing damp and mould.

#### **4.2 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & MANAGERS**

The Executive Officers and Senior Manager must ensure the following:

- Adequate resources and competent person(s) are allocated to support the implementation of this Management Procedure and relevant associated Health and Safety legislation.
- Nominated person(s) are supported in implementing the measures of this Management Procedure to comply with relevant Health and Safety legislation.

#### **4.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM**

The EDC Health and Safety Team will advise the management in fulfilling their duties regarding the implementation of this Management Procedure and associated regulations and guidance.

In particular, the Health and Safety Team shall:

- Advise the Executive Officer, Service Manager, Team Leaders, supervisors, and coordinators in fulfilling their duties.
- Work with teams to provide feedback about actions and control measures that may need to be taken to prevent harm and protect employees.
- Provide and reinforce training and education on health risks associated with certain tasks.
- Monitor the compliance with this management procedure and the associated regulations and guidance by carrying out periodical audits and inspections and issuing subsequent reports detailing any possible gaps or issues that need to be addressed.

#### **4.4 EMPLOYEES**

All persons employed by East Dunbartonshire Council with key roles and responsibilities identified, must familiarise themselves with SP50 – Damp, Mould & Condensation Procedure, and all associated documents.

Employees must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. To cooperate with EDC in assisting those to fulfil the requirements detailed in this procedure.

Employees must attend all training courses provided by the Council, apply, and keep their knowledge up to date so they can provide best advice and support for tenants. Ensuring that any works that maybe conducted on damp or mould, provides less disturbance to the tenants as possible and to always ensure that health and safety is the number one priority.

#### **4.5 EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS**

The Council will appoint a competent specialist contractor to assist in the process of remediating a damp and mould issue in particular:

- Identifying causes of damp and mould - a damp surveyor will be able to carry out a damp survey, identify the root cause of the issue, identify which type of damp it is and advise appropriate remediation accordingly.
- Safely removing larger damp and mould occurrences - while smaller instances of damp and mould may be removed by a tenant or the Council, for safety reasons larger areas of mould will require professional removal. Depending on the level of mould present, the Council may wish to instruct specialist hygiene and/or cleaning services for remediation. The Council will seek guidance and advice from the Contractor on the most appropriate approach.
- Advising on how to improve ventilation and condensation control within a property, to support in addressing an existing issue and/or prevent future issues from occurring.
- Identifying and/or addressing building deficiencies causing damp and mould.
- Liaise with the Council during the duration of the project and share information.

#### **4.6 HOUSING**

East Dunbartonshire Council's Housing Service acting as Landlord will liaise with its tenants and provide advice and support where necessary about DMC, for instance how to report. This will be achieved through regular engagement and with the collaboration of other services. Housing help produce publications such as the tenant's handbook which has a lot of useful information for tenants.

Housing will liaise with Property Maintenance to ensure all statutory repairs are carried out within set timescales, Void Checks are completed in a timely manner and will share information about their housing stock portfolio.

## **4.7 CONTACT CENTRE**

Customer Services receive correspondence from tenant (via all channels, Face to Face, Telephone, Online). Based on information provided by our tenants and using FAQ's Customer Service Agent (CSA) will determine if a damp/mould inspection is required or urgent/emergency repair or indeed no action is taken. The Contact Centre team works closely with the Property Maintenance Team daily, sharing information.

## **4.8 PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**

The Council commits to:

- Providing and maintaining a comfortable, warm, and healthy home, free from damp, condensation, mould, or disrepair for its tenants.
- Ensure that tenants are treated in a fair and consistent way and to recognise that having a dampness or mould issues in a home can be distressing for tenants and ensure a supportive approach.
- Undertake effective investigations and implement all reasonable remedial repair solutions and improvements to eradicate damp and mould including managing and controlling condensation.
- Not make assumptions about lifestyle and will investigate reports of damp and mould as fully as possible to determine the cause.
- Work in partnership with tenants to resolve and understand how to reduce condensation, damp, and mould issues.
- Ensure that tenants have access to and are provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling damp and condensation.
- Ensuring that the fabric of Council homes is protected from deterioration and damage resulting from, or contributing to, damp and mould issues.
- Undertake responsive repairs to alleviate damp and mould issues as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise damage to the fabric, fixtures, and fittings of the property.
- Enhance the understanding of the Council's housing stock and the archetype of properties and components from the stock condition data, which have a higher likelihood to suffer from damp and mould.
- Plan resources to respond to anticipated higher demand of enquiries, required inspections and work in partnership with specialist companies for the provision of specialist survey reports, including making use of new technology such as linked environmental sensors. The sensors can be installed within reported problematic damp or mould homes and monitored online to better understand the cause and possible solution.

- Ensure that only competent specialist contractors are appointed to carry out surveys and damp and mould remediation works, adhering to the Council's procedures and maintaining independence in assessments.
- Provide staff with the skills and testing equipment to identify and differentiate between signs of damp, condensation, mould and understand the causes and remedial action.
- To consider the issues of damp condensation and mould when designing investment programmes for example heating, ventilation, and insulation projects.
- To comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements, sector best practice and tenants' health and safety compliance.
- Provide a written report to the tenant and update as necessary. The Council will keep track of all correspondence between key stakeholders, adopt a risk-based approach and inform the tenant of the findings of the investigations following a property visit. This will include identifying the possible causes of damp, recommending effective solutions and all necessary remedial works / actions / enhancements and the estimated timescales to complete the works /measures; keeping the tenant updated throughout the process from inception to completion.
- Not close off cases until the Council is certain that reported dampness and mould is no longer a problem in a tenant's home.
- Implement data quality and insight measures to assist with informing the Council of the possible risks to its properties so that it can undertake proactive measures to eliminate damp, mould, and condensation before it becomes a problem for tenants.

#### **4.9 TENANTS**

The Council requests that all tenants:

- Immediately report any evidence of rising, penetrating and traumatic damp (see definitions) and faulty equipment that will affect the management of humidity and moisture in the home (faulty extract fan, unable to open windows, heating system failure, leaking pipes etc.)
- Try to reduce the conditions that lead to condensation dampness by keeping the presence of moisture to a minimum e.g., covering pans when cooking, drying laundry outside (where possible) or alternatively in a well-ventilated room with the door closed, keeping the kitchen or bathroom door closed when cooking or bathing.
- The council requests that all tenants heat their homes effectively. Keeping the house well-ventilated e.g., opening windows during cooking / bathing, turning on and ensuring that the extractor fan or ventilation system installed in their home is regularly cleaned and working, keeping trickle vents in windows open, and allow air to circulate around furniture.
- Follow all advice and guidance issued by the Council on managing humidity and moisture in the home which can lead to condensation. This information can be found in the Council's tenants handbook.

- If all reasonable efforts have been made to manage and control the presence of condensation and mould, and this has not been successful, the tenant should contact the Council immediately to identify a property solution.
- Allow access for inspections and for the carrying out of all remedial works.
- If following an inspection by an independent specialist surveyor, the outcome shows that all reasonable measures are in place for the customer to adequately control condensation and mould, further advice and support will be given to the tenant such as providing advice on best use of heating system and best way to ventilate the property.
- Where tenants are considering making any changes within their home: for example, converting rooms into one room, adding extensions, converting non-habitable buildings/spaces into habitable, they must seek advice and permission from the Council in accordance with their tenancy agreement, to ensure that the proposed alteration would not contribute to the accumulation of damp, mould, or condensation, as well as ensuring alterations comply with building control and planning guidelines.
- Where a tenant is not satisfied with the Council's response, they should raise this through the Council's Complaints Handling Procedure.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

### 5.1 UNDERSTANDING DAMP & MOULD

Damp is the build-up of moisture in a property. It affects building materials (such as walls, floors, ceilings, foundations) and/or home furnishings and belongings (such as carpets, curtains, wallpaper, furniture, and clothing). In addition to causing damage, damp can also lead to the growth of mould and other microorganisms. Damp can occur in homes for a variety of reasons. Irrespective of the type of damp (condensation, penetrating, rising or traumatic), landlords are legally responsible for addressing damp and mould and should work with qualified professionals to help manage the situation.

**Note:** Staff and Tenants should refer to the Government Guidance - [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-and-addressing-the-health-risks-of-damp-and-mould-in-the-home) - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

### 5.2 CONDENSATION DAMP

Condensation damp happens when moisture generated inside the home cools and condenses onto colder parts of the buildings (for example window frames, corners, and low points on walls behind sofas or wardrobes). This is the most common form of damp.

There are a number of means to address condensation:

- Addressing building deficiencies – Repairing the source of water intrusion, such as fixing leaking pipes, clearing blocked gutters, defective roofs, broken seals around windows or ill-fitting windows that do not close fully, faulty damp proof courses, flood damage and other structural deficiencies such as cracks in render or the foundation.
- Improving ventilation - damaged, blocked, absent, or switched off mechanical ventilation (for example, extractors in kitchens and bathrooms)

- Improving energy efficiency (Loft and wall insulation) and addressing inadequate heating systems.
- Help to educate tenants about the Health & Safety risks that may be associated with damp and mould if left unattended and make recommendations to help tenants mitigate any potential risk. The exact approach will depend on the specific conditions of the dwelling.

### 5.3 PENETRAITING DAMP

Penetrating damp is water that gets into the building from outside due to defects in the walls, roofs, windows, or floors.

### 5.4 RISING DAMP

Rising damp is moisture from the ground that rises through parts of the buildings in contact with the ground (walls and floors); it is usually found in older properties and is often misdiagnosed. It can be identified through visual inspection; however chemical testing is the most appropriate way of confirming it. Often it is due to defective damp proof courses and membranes.

### 5.5 TRAUMATIC DAMP

Traumatic damp can be caused by leaking water from plumbing and or central 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.

### 5.6 MOULD

Mould is a type of fungus which grows in moist environments. Mould can cause adverse health effects as well as damage to buildings.

## 6. THE COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO MANAGING DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION

### 6.1 TIMEFRAME FOR INVESTIGATING HAZARDS

East Dunbartonshire Council will investigate the causes of damp and mould within **14 (fourteen) calendar days** of a complaint being made. The Council aims to investigate all reports as soon as reasonably practicable.

When the initial report is received, an assessment of risk will be determined to prioritise the level of risk involved and establish a specific timeframe using a risk-based approach for instance are there signs of damp (**Low risk**), and or mould (**High Risk**)

Any tenant who is concerned about any symptoms they are experiencing should be advised to consult a healthcare professional. The Council will not delay action to await medical evidence or opinion - medical evidence is not a requirement for action, and damp and mould should always be addressed promptly to protect tenants' health.

If considered **Low Risk**, the council would aim to investigate within **5 (five) working days** however if considered **High Risk**, the council would aim to investigate within **3 (three) working days**

Where this is not possible for the tenant, the Council will arrange to visit their home as soon as possible thereafter, all information will be positively recorded on the tracking system and available for audit purposes on request.

**Note:** If in doubt the Council will err on the side of safety and arrange access within **3 (three) working days** of receiving the initial report.

The housing repairs officer appointed by property maintenance will attend to complete the initial investigation and complete a written report with appropriate action plan with recommendations.

An appointed specialist contractor may be contacted to offer support to the Council and our tenants as part of the investigation process. The specialist contractor will aim to contact the tenant within **72hrs** from receipt of instructions from the Council and will aim to gain access to carry out a survey thereafter within **48hrs** and complete a full written report.

If repairs officer deems urgent works are required prior to survey requested, this will be issued to the contractor (Decontamination works).

## **6.2 WRITTEN SUMARIES OF INVESTIGATION FINDINGS**

East Dunbartonshire Council will aim to issue a written summary of the findings of the investigation to tenants within **48 hours** of the investigation concluding.

### **The written summary must specify, at minimum:**

- How and when the investigation was conducted and the job title of the individual who conducted the investigation.
- Any following investigations that are required, and if so when likely to take place.
- If a hazard was found, identifying it.
- whether the hazard is likely to pose a **significant risk** to residents' health or safety.
- If it does pose a risk:
  - Temporary repairs needed to make the property safe until the problem can be permanently rectified [if applicable]
  - Permanent measures the Council will seek to put in place to rectify the problem and likely timescales
- How to contact the Council with any queries.
- Attach photographs and or drawings.

If, within **48 hours** of the investigation, the registered provider is not able to set out full details of wider repair works, and only the immediate steps they are taking (i.e. temporary repairs), they should inform the resident of when they can expect a full schedule of works.

If a hazard is identified through the investigation that poses a **significant and imminent risk** of harm to the health or safety of an individual, the Council will initiate a shorter timescale to start work in accordance with our emergency hazard process. **Please see section 6.5 titled Timescales for emergency repairs** for more information.

The Council will not be required to provide a written summary ahead of completing repair works when addressing emergency hazards. In circumstances where temporary measures have been put in place to address emergency hazards or where residents have been offered suitable alternative accommodation, the Council will be expected to issue a written summary to the resident to ensure they understand the issue in their home, what the Council will do to permanently rectify the problem and the likely timescales for this.

The Council will take into consideration any accessibility and/or language needs of the tenant to ensure that the summary of findings can be understood.

The Council recognises that in some cases (for example issues involving structural damp) a full investigation into the cause of the problem can take longer than **14 days**. The Council will still be required to conduct an initial investigation **as soon as possible** and within that **14-day** period to assess the severity of the issue and determine next steps (which may include arranging for a specialist damp survey). There may be instances where the Council will not be able to set out exact dates for next steps for example, where dates are dependent on external contractors' availability. In those instances, the Council will provide an estimated timeframe to residents and follow up with specific timings in writing.

The level of risk that a hazard presents will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, making **'significant risk of harm'** a subjective term.

The Council will adopt a system of priority colour coding for condensation, damp, and mould issues within its properties. This will also be included within the damp and mould tracker, reports and adopted procedures.

| Low Risk          | Medium Risk             | High Risk                  |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| No Risk to Health | Moderate Risk to Health | Significant Risk to Health |

### 6.3 BEGINNING REPAIR WORKS

If the investigation indicates that a reported hazard is likely to pose a significant risk to the health or safety of the resident, the Council will begin repair works within **7 (seven) calendar days** of the written summary being issued.

The Council consider that 'beginning' repair works would entail a worker being on site physically starting to repair and rectify a hazard, whether works are carried out by in-house workers, external contractors, or a combined approach.

If the Council is unable to determine whether a hazard poses a **significant risk** to a resident's health or safety, they should take a cautious approach and take any necessary action to mitigate health risks.

## 6.4 COMPLETING REPAIR WORKS

The Council will complete repair works within a reasonable time. The tenant will be informed of this time and their needs should be considered.

Undertake responsive repairs to alleviate damp as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimise damage to the fabric, fixtures, and fittings of the property with a target of a maximum of **20 days (twenty) working days to complete repairs.** The Council recognises that some hazards will be more complex than others to repair and for this reason believe it would be impractical to set a fixed time limit for the completion of all repairs. Many repairs can be completed in a matter of hours or days, such as installing a new boiler or replacing a broken window, whilst structural damp issues can take several weeks and require ongoing monitoring.

The Council will complete repairs within a **reasonable period** - meaning repairs should not be unreasonably delayed and evidence should be provided where delays to repairs are necessary. Planned programmes of works in the future cannot substitute work needed to address hazards in social homes, which must be prioritised.

Timescales for the completion of works should reflect the nature of the problem, for example repairing space and water heating systems must be treated more urgently during colder weather and can be challenged by the tenant.

Timescales for completing repairs should be proportionate to the scale of the repair and consider the needs of occupants.

This requirement would be in line with the Council's existing obligations to make repairs within a reasonable amount of time under terms implied by the tenancy agreements through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Scottish Housing Quality Standards.

## 6.5 TIMESCALES FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS

The Council **must** action emergency repairs **as soon as reasonably practicable** and, in any event, within **24hrs.**

The Council consider hazards warranting emergency repairs are those that present a **significant and imminent risk of harm**. The level of risk that a hazard presents will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis, making '**significant risk of harm**' a subjective term. Risk is the likelihood that a person may be harmed or suffer adverse health effects if exposed to a hazard.

There will be circumstances where a tenant reports a hazard in their home that warrants an emergency repair. Hazards that pose **significant and imminent danger** to residents will require faster action and will be treated as an emergency by the Council. These are repairs that are to prevent serious damage to the building; are a danger to health; a risk to safety; or a risk of serious loss or damage to the occupier's property, for example:

- gas leaks
- broken boilers (no hot water or central heating) and no alternative heating
- lack of water supply

- Sanitation issues (only one toilet in the property)
- electrical hazards such as exposed wiring
- significant leaks
- broken external doors or windows that present a risk to home security
- Prevalent damp and mould

The Council will attend to emergency repairs **as soon as possible** to ensure they are meeting their duties to keep homes fit for human habitation, free of hazards and ultimately to ensure the Council are protecting residents from harm.

## **6.6 DECANTING IF THE PROPERTY CANNOT BE MADE SAFE IMMEDIATELY**

If the investigation finds a hazard that poses a significant, or a significant and imminent, risk of harm or danger, and the property cannot be made safe within the specified timescales the Council will offer to arrange for the occupant(s) to stay in suitable alternative temporary accommodation until it is safe to return.

## **6.7 RECORD KEEPING**

The Council will keep clear records of all attempts to comply with the proposals, including records of all correspondence with the tenant(s) and any contractors. The Council has a management system which will help capture all relevant information about properties and tenants.

All information will be recorded along with all actions taken by staff and concerns raised by tenants or third parties, including the outcome of the issue based on a risk-based approach.

If the Council makes all reasonable attempts to comply with the timescales but is unable to for reasons genuinely beyond the Council's control, the Council will be expected to provide a record of the reasons that prevented them from doing so.

## **6.8 ACCESS**

If the Council is unable to access a property to investigate or make repairs the following actions would be taken to constitute reasonable attempts for access:

- Landlords must make at least **3 (three) attempts** to contact the tenant (or appointed representative) and arrange a suitable time to access the property.
- The Council will work with tenants to arrange a suitable time to visit the property. It will offer timeslots for residents to choose from and will take into consideration the tenants' needs (for example their working pattern) when offering timeslots to attend to the property.
- If the Council are unable to access the property within the agreed timeslot, the tenant will be carded. The card will advise that access was attempted and prompt the tenant to make contact. The Council will attempt to contact the resident and offer an alternative slot.

- The Council will not be expected to make more than **3 (three) attempts** to access the property within the agreed timeslots. The Council will be expected to keep evidence that it has made best efforts to work with the tenant to identify a timeslot and the resident has either not responded or has refused access within that slot.
- Throughout this process, the Council will keep a record of all correspondence made with residents, noting the date, time and actions attempted.
- Specialised Contractors must follow the same process and inform the Council of all actions so it can track all correspondence.

## 6.9 FOLLOW- UP TO ENSURE THE ISSUE HAS BEEN ADDRESSED

To ensure that treatment has been effective, and damp and mould has not reappeared, any improvement work should be accompanied by a follow-up visit to the property. The Council will allow **at least 6 (six) weeks** after the initial treatment to revisit the dwelling.

Any issues reported by tenants in the meantime should be acted upon promptly. If damp and mould have reappeared, further investigation and intervention should be pursued.

## 6.10 PROACTIVE APPROACH

The Council will adopt but not be limited to the following proactive measures for managing DMC in our housing stock:

- Having clear processes in place to document, manage and act on reports of DMC and to identify common issues and trends in Council housing stock.
- A risk-based approach is adopted to prioritise and focus on properties susceptible to DMC utilising stock condition, repairs information and feedback from tenants.
- Proactive assessments of stock condition surveys are undertaken. Understanding the condition of the Council's housing stock and using this to adopt a preventative approach to dealing with damp and mould, making the necessary interventions to ventilation, energy efficiency and building deficiencies before damp and mould occur.
- That the fabric of the housing stock it owns are managed and maintained to prevent deterioration and damage resulting from DMC.
- Improvement and retrofit programmes of work will be carried out where DMC consistently affects a particular property archetype.
- Capital Works Programme – Energy efficiency measures for instance installing A-rated boilers, double glazing or ensuring homes are better insulated.
- Annual Gas Safety Checks and routine maintenance to ensure that the central heating systems in our tenant's homes are working safely and efficiently.

- Housing and Repair Officers, during visits are trained to identify DMC, provide advice and guidance to help resolve any issues. Building relationships with tenants, ensuring that tenants feel encouraged to report damp and mould.
- Staff are supplied with appropriate equipment capable of identifying cold spots, thermal bridging, etc. to help identify the root cause of DMC in the housing stock.
- Where appropriate will collect humidity and temperature sensor data to identify the potential for DMC in homes and provide an appropriate action plan.
- Void checks will be enhanced to include the checking of extraction and ventilation systems.
- Where there are known issues of DMC in empty properties, works will be carried out as part of the void works to address the issue.
- Supporting tenants to understand what they can do to reduce DMC where applicable and appropriate. This must never be a substitute for addressing the underlying causes of damp and mould.

## **6.11 TRAINING INTERNAL STAFF AND EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS**

All frontline staff will receive general awareness training on DMC to allow them to identify and respond to issues relating to concerns raised and will be made aware of the Council's policies and procedures. The training will include but not limited to staff being able to understand the significant health risks associated with damp and mould, the need to address the underlying causes of the issue and not just remove visible mould, are aware of any processes associated with reporting and addressing damp and mould and understand the importance of being sensitive to tenants' circumstances and vulnerabilities.

This training will be relevant for those staff visiting customers in their homes. This will allow front line staff to identify instances of DMC in order that a proactive approach may be adopted to address DMC in the Council's tenanted homes.

Specific technical training for all key staff identified, for instance Housing Repair Officers, Contact Call Centre Staff, Management, etc. identified in dealing with damp and mould will be provided with training and external contractors will be made familiar with the Council's Policies and Procedures.

## **7. ADVICE AND GUIDANCE FOR TENANTS**

The Council is committed to providing and maintaining homes that are free from DMC. The Council will ensure that:

- Its homes are warm, safe, wind and watertight and provide healthy environments for customers.
- Tenants are provided with a range of ways to report DMC and will be treated in a fair and consistent way.

- Tenants are provided with the appropriate support to resolve issues for instance cost of living pressures through internal teams or external statutory/ non-statutory agencies.
- Tenants have access to and or provided with comprehensive advice and guidance on managing and controlling factors which could cause DMC in their homes. More details can be found in the tenants' handbook, EDC Newsletters, EDC Dampness leaflet all of which are provided to tenants.
- Feedback is obtained from tenants and reviewed with actions implemented if necessary.
- Tenants are provided with the Council's complaints procedure with details in how to raise a complaint by various channels for instance, in person, by telephone, email, by using complaints form on the Council's website at [www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk](http://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk). Independent advice about any complaint can be obtained from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Details can be found in the tenants' information pack and newsletters.
- Support will be provided to vulnerable tenants based on a case-by-case basis, e.g., translation services or sourcing funds and grants to help with fuel costs.

## 8. MONITOR AND REVIEW

As part of the EDC Health and Safety Management System, the EDC Health and Safety Team will conduct regular audits and inspections to monitor the implementation of this management procedure.

The EDC Health and Safety Team will review this management procedure every two years from the date of signing or sooner because of any changes to legislation or some other event i.e., a major incident or accident.

The EDC Health and Safety Team will provide feedback in the form of a report following any audits and inspections. When necessary, the procedure will be amended and reissued with an updated version number.

All Team Leaders must ensure that local procedures are updated to reflect any changes to the management procedure.

## 9. REFERENCES

### HSE Guidance and Regulation

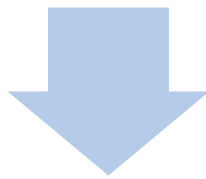
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Housing (Scotland) Acts 1987, 2001, 2006, 2010 and 2014
- Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and Building Standards Technical Handbook
- Right to Repair (Housing Scotland Act 1987 as amended 2001 and 2010)
- Right to Compensation for Improvements (Housing Scotland Act 1987 as amended 2001 and 2010)
- Scottish Social Housing Charter 2012
- Scottish Housing Quality and Performance Standards
- Energy Efficiency Standards in social Housing (EESH 1 & 2)

- Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 2002
- Environmental Health Protection Act 1990
- Equalities Act 2010
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004
- The Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011 and Code of Conduct
- The Health & Safety Executive Guidance
- Housing Ombudsman Spotlight Report October 2021 - [Housing Ombudsman Spotlight report on damp and mould \(housing-ombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/spotlight-report-on-damp-and-mould)
- SFHA/ALACHO/CIH/SHR Briefing – Putting Safety First - [Putting safety first: a briefing note on damp and mould for social housing practitioners in Scotland \(cih.org\)](https://www.cih.org.uk/putting-safety-first-a-briefing-note-on-damp-and-mould-for-social-housing-practitioners-in-scotland)
- Government Guidance - [Understanding and addressing the health risks of damp and mould in the home - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/understanding-and-addressing-the-health-risks-of-damp-and-mould-in-the-home)
- Government Guidance - [Awaab's Law: Consultation on timescales for repairs in the social rented sector - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/awaab-s-law-consultation-on-timescales-for-repairs-in-the-social-rented-sector)
- Government Survey: Scottish House Condition Survey- [Scottish House Condition Survey - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/scottish-house-condition-survey)
- East Dunbartonshire Council: Health and Safety Policies
- HSP01 Health and Safety Policy
- HSP02 Gas Safety Policy
- HSP03 Fire Safety Policy
- HSP04 Management of Asbestos Policy
- HSP05 Management of Contractors Policy
- HSP06 Occupational Health Policy
- HSP07 Controlling Workplace Hazards Policy
- P08 Damp, Mould & Condensation Management (PM) Inspection Checklist

## 10. APPENDIX

### 10.1 APPENDIX 1: DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION REPORTING PROCESS

**Step 1** – Customer Services receive correspondence from tenant (via all channels, Face to Face, Telephone, Online) Based on information provided by tenant and using FAQ's Customer Service Agent determines if a damp/mould inspection required or urgent/emergency repair or indeed no action.



**Step 2** – Customer Service Agent (CSA) has identified that a damp / mould inspection is required Using the Servitor system CSA raises a damp / mould inspection. CSA will use appropriate inspectors code (locality based, ie East, Central, West) CSA will also use specific damp / mould priority code (**B7**) and appropriate Schedule of Rates Code (locality based) Job number is then generated.

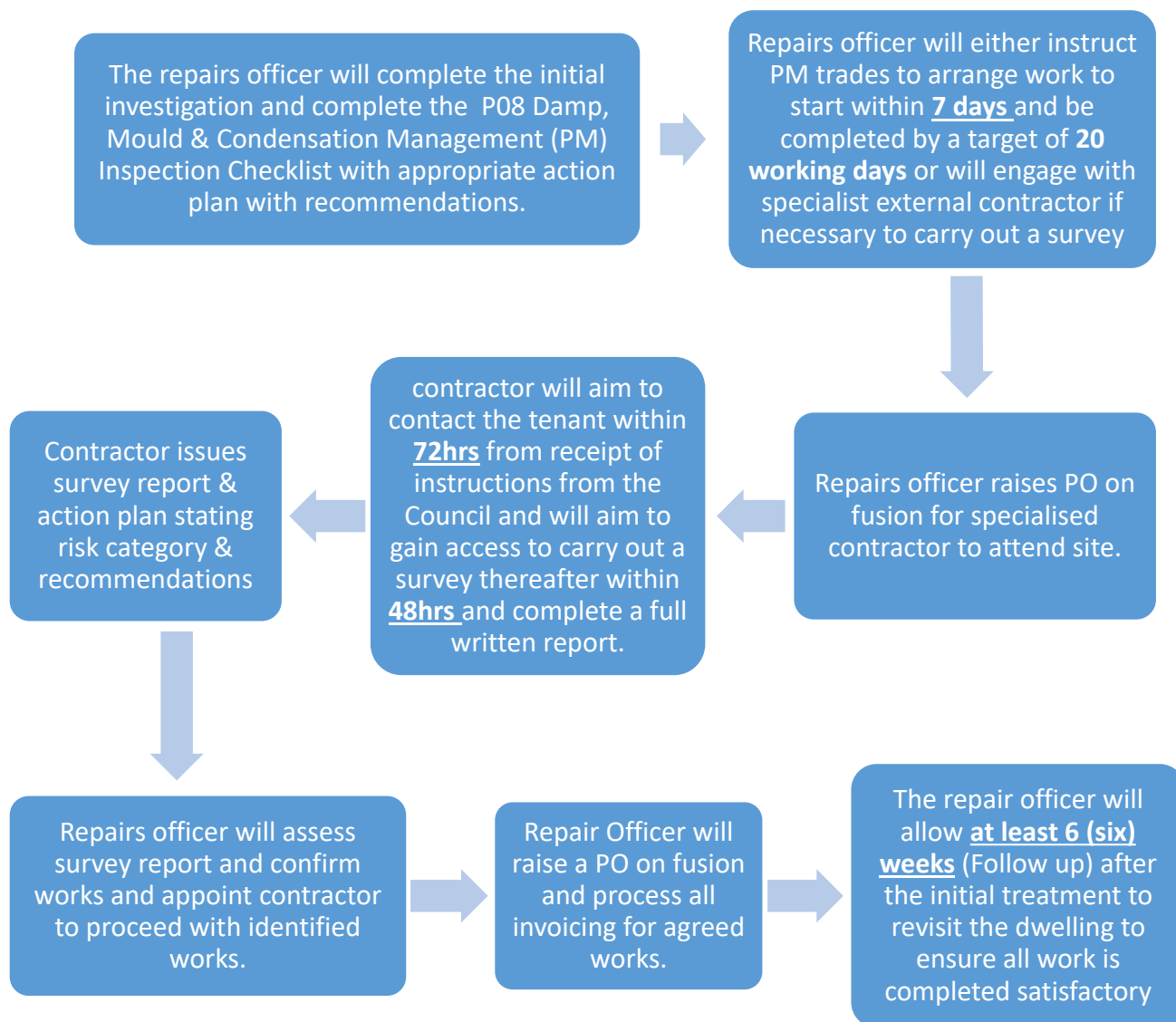


**Step 3** – CSA will launch Total Mobile system and then using the appropriate Inspectors diary will select an AM or PM appointment as agreed with the tenant within a **3-5 day** timescale. If this appointment timescale does not suit the tenant then a suitable appointment date will be agreed and where this appointment is **5+ days**, the CSA should add a note against the job on Servitor confirming same.

**Note:** Inspectors locality codes: East = IE, Central = IB, West = IW

Inspectors schedule of rates codes: East = 100002, Central = 100003, West = 100004

## 10.2 APPENDIX 2: DAMP, MOULD & CONDENSATION INVESTIGATION PROCESS



**Note:** SP50 – Damp Mould Condensation Management (PM) procedure should be read in full. Please see section 6.7 titled Record Keeping for more information.